

**ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
AND
FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT**

For

**Master Plan
U.S. Army Soldier Systems Center
Natick, Massachusetts**

October 2013

Prepared for

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FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

Master Plan U.S. Army Soldier Systems Center Natick, Massachusetts

The U.S. Army Natick Soldiers Systems Center (NSSC) is located in Natick, Massachusetts, approximately 20 miles west of Boston and 30 miles east of Worcester. The installation is located on a peninsula on the eastern shore of the South Basin of Lake Cochituate. The Army built the Natick Laboratory in 1954 and has since used the area for industrial, laboratory, and storage activities for research and development in food science, aero-mechanical, clothing, material, and equipment engineering.

The Real Property Master Plan (RPMP) is a decision-support document and the recommended or proposed actions must be assessed for their environmental effects in accordance with AR 210-20. An Environmental Assessment (EA) is completed to evaluate the potential impacts and cumulative effects of projects being proposed in the RPMP. The EA also provides responsible and timely protection, conservation, and enhancement of project environmental and cultural resources and ensures environmental mandates and considerations are incorporated in the planning process.

The Preferred Alternative provides areas to accommodate new mission growth, provides additional administrative, storage, and parking facilities and incorporates all the known design requirements that were identified during the planning process. It also maintains the installation design vision of a walkable campus environment, allows for the consolidation of housing onto the installation, provides a consolidated industrial area, perimeter and structured parking, and recreation and green space areas. This plan is based upon a 20 year planning window but is flexible enough to incorporate the Army's needs to grow and change over time. The plan will be reviewed on an as-needed basis but at a minimum of every 5 years to address necessary design changes.

The Master Plan EA is prepared pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), Council of Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations 40 CFR, 1500–1517, and Policy and Procedures for Implementing NEPA Army Regulation (AR) 200-2 (23 December 1988) and 32 Code of Federal Regulation (CFR) Part 651 (29 March 2002). I find that based on the evaluation of environmental effects discussed in this document, the proposed Master Plan is not a major federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment. Under the Council on Environmental Quality ("CEQ") NEPA regulations, "NEPA significance" is a concept dependent upon context and intensity (40 C.F.R. § 1508.27.) When considering a site-specific action like the Master Plan, significance is measured by the impacts felt at a local scale, as opposed to a regional or nationwide context. The CEQ regulations identify a number of factors to measure the intensity of impact. These factors are discussed below, and none are implicated here to warrant a finding of NEPA significance. A review of these NEPA "intensity" factors reveals that the proposed action would not result in a significant impact - neither

beneficial nor detrimental - to the human environment.

Impacts on public health or safety: The project is expected to have no effect on public health and safety. During the construction phase of the proposed project, heavy construction equipment and vehicles will be transported to the site. However, the construction area is located on U.S. Army property which limits access for the general public.

Unique characteristics: The NSSC Master does not impact wild and scenic rivers, prime farmlands or waters of the United States. Impacts to cultural and historic resources have been considered in the Master Plan EA (see Historic Resources section below).

Controversy: The proposed project is not controversial.

Uncertain impacts: The impacts of the proposed project are not uncertain, they are readily understood based on past experiences the Army NSSC has had with similar projects.

Precedent for future actions: The Master Plan EA was prepared pursuant to the requirements contained in Army Regulations 210-20 (Real Property Master Planning for Army Installations) and will not establish a precedent for future actions.

Cumulative significance: As discussed in the EA, to the extent that other actions are expected to be related to project as proposed, these actions will provide little measurable cumulative impact.

Historic resources: The NSSC Master Plan Consolidated Area Development Plan (Master Plan ADP), Alternative Six, envisions specific activities and undertaking that will be implemented in five phases, including demolition, new construction, and infrastructure and site/landscape modifications. Several of the proposed individual undertakings that the NSSC facility has programmed under the Master Plan ADP during the five year planning period of the Integrated Cultural Resource Management Plan (PAL, Inc. and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New England District 2011) have the potential to have an effect on historic architectural properties. An evaluation of the effects of each undertaking on historic properties and their setting will be conducted, as specified in a Programmatic Agreement (Appendix F). The Programmatic Agreement was executed between the Natick Soldier Systems Center facility and the Massachusetts State Historic Preservation Office (MA SHPO). The Programmatic Agreement provides guidance on how to evaluate and if necessary minimize or mitigate any effects on the Quartermaster Research and Development Center (QRDC) Historic District, for each of the undertakings involving demolition or alteration of historic buildings or structures, and any major changes to their site surroundings.

Endangered species: The project will have no known positive or negative impacts on any Federal threatened or endangered species. The Eastern Pondmussle (*Ligumia nasuta*), a species of "Special Concern" in Massachusetts has been found in the vicinity of the NSSC. No impacts, such as changes to flow, habitat encroachment and habitat degradation through the removal of lakeside vegetation are proposed. The use of proper sediment erosion control will be used during construction to prevent changes in water quality.

Potential violation of federal law: This action will not violate federal law.

Based on my review and evaluation of the environmental effects as presented in the Environmental Assessment, I have determined that the Army Natick Soldier Systems Center Master Plan is not a major Federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment. Therefore, I have determined that this project is exempt from requirements to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement.

JAN 28 2014

Date



BRIAN R. GREATA
LTC, SF
Commanding
U.S. Army Garrison Natick

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

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ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Natick Soldier Systems Center Master Plan

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose and Need

The most recent U.S. Army Natick Soldier Systems Center (NSSC) Real Property Master Plan, Long Range Component (LRC), is dated February 2004 and is currently being updated. The Master Plan document serves as a guide for coordination of project development and management of all land and water resources on an Army installation. Master Plan project development provides for adequate Force Protection/Anti-Terrorism measures; provides modern and efficient facilities to accommodate multiple functions and users; considers functional relationships to adjacent facilities; and provides sustainable design, functional perimeter parking and compatible architectural features. The Master Plan completion process ensures there is a coordinated and well thought out implementation plan to meet the installation functional mission goals and future operational requirements in conjunction with installation resource capabilities and sustainability. The evaluation period of the Master Plan is 20 years with periodic updates and revisions as installation change dictates or, at a minimum, all components will be reviewed every 5 years (Army Regulation (AR) 210-20 Real Property Master Planning of Army Installations, 16 May 2005).

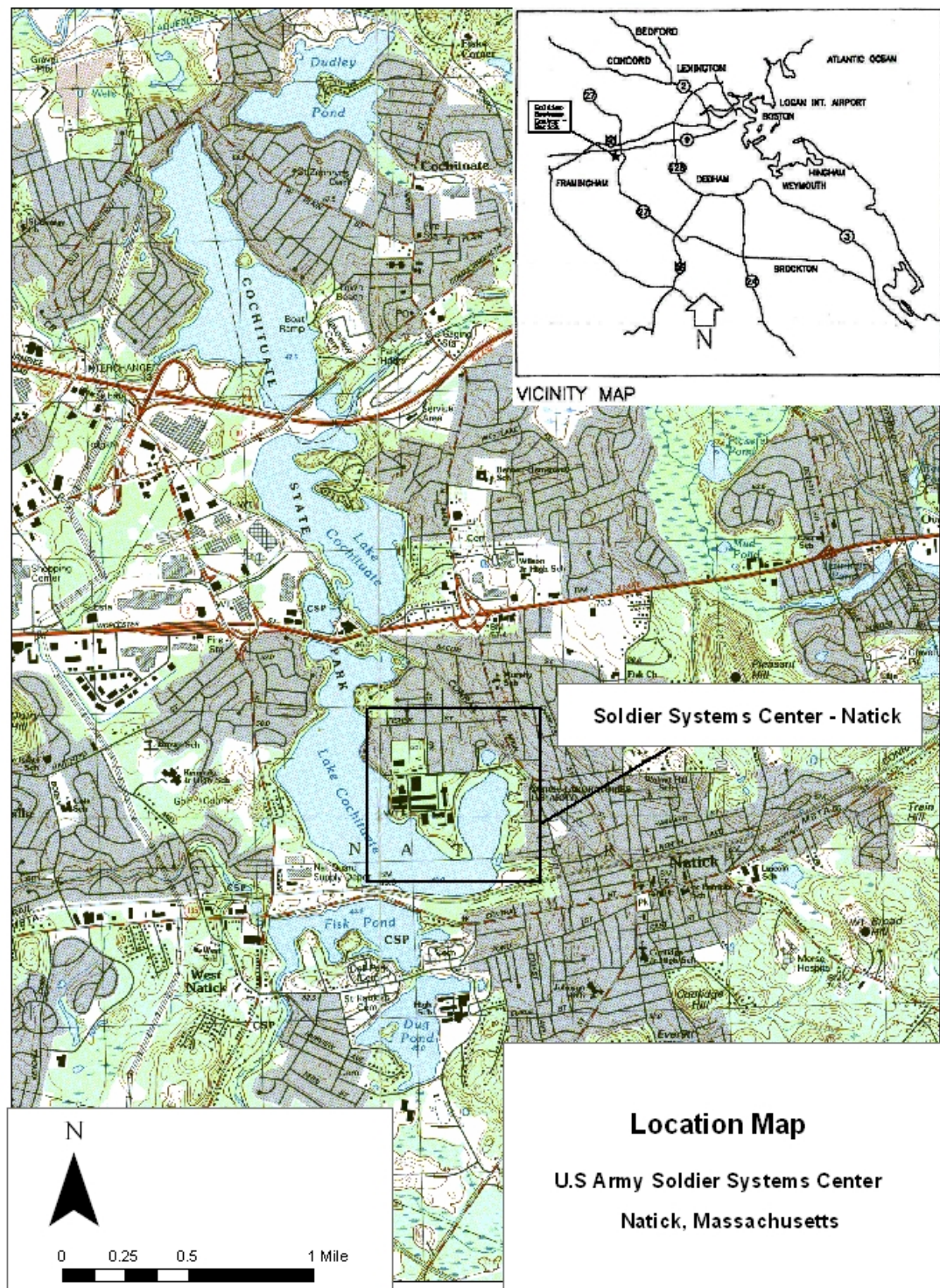
The Real Property Master Plan (RPMP) is a decision-support document and the recommended or proposed actions must be assessed for their environmental effects in accordance with AR 210-20. An Environmental Assessment (EA) is completed to evaluate the potential impacts and cumulative effects of projects being proposed in the RPMP. The EA also provides responsible and timely protection, conservation, and enhancement of project environmental and cultural resources and ensures environmental mandates and considerations are incorporated in the planning process. The Master Plan EA is prepared pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), Council of Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations 40 CFR, 1500–1517, and Policy and Procedures for Implementing NEPA Army Regulation (AR) 200-2 (23 December 1988) and 32 Code of Federal Regulation (CFR) Part 651 (29 March 2002).

2.0 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

2.1 Location and Site History

The U.S. Army Natick Soldiers Systems Center is located in Natick, Middlesex County, Massachusetts, approximately 20 miles west of Boston and 30 miles east of Worcester. The installation is located on a peninsula on the eastern shore of the South Basin of Lake Cochituate. The Natick Soldier Systems Center (NSSC) is bounded on the west, south, and east by Lake Cochituate and bounded on the north by Kansas Street and residential housing. The land use in the vicinity of the NSSC installation includes residential, commercial/retail and light industrial facilities (see Figure 1 - Location Map).

Figure 1 – Location Map



The site was purchased by the Army in 1949 from the Metropolitan District Commission.

At that time, it was used primarily as a forested recreational area. The Army built the Natick Laboratory in 1954 and has since used the area for industrial, laboratory, and storage activities for research and development in food science, aero-mechanical, clothing, material, and equipment engineering. U.S. Army Natick Soldier Systems Center provides dedicated research, development, engineering and acquisition support for the soldier in any and all environments (Natick Soldier Systems Center 2008b).

2.2 Installation Mission and Description

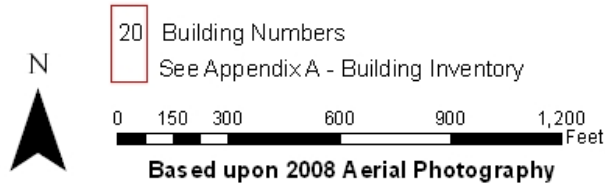
The mission of the Natick Soldier Systems Center (NSSC) is to conduct research, development, acquisition and sustainment to maximize combat effectiveness and survivability of soldiers. The NSSC accomplishes its mission by providing total life cycle management of soldier and related support systems through centralized development, procurement, integration, and management of equipment, clothing, food and protection for the individual soldier as well as shelters, airdrop, field service and organizational equipment. U.S. Army Garrison Natick, as all other Army installations, falls under the Installation Management Command (IMCOM), which provides equitable, effective and efficient management of the installation and serves as U.S. Army Garrison Natick's parent organization.

The NSSC has over 120 buildings located on 174 acres in the Town of Natick and neighboring communities. The main campus is 78 acres. Facilities include administration, laboratories, maintenance, storage, and housing areas. A self-contained city, NSSC also has a shopette, cafeteria, barbershop, credit union, recreation center, and a travel office and other unique facilities which allow the researchers an unparalleled capability to support America's troops. One of these facilities is a Climatic Chamber that allows researchers to generate worldwide extreme climatic conditions to test equipment, or to test human performance in extreme conditions, in a controlled environment. In addition, NSSC has the following unique/specialized facilities: Altitude Chamber, Textile Facility, Combat Rations Production and Packaging Facility, Biomechanics Lab, 3-D Anthropometrics Lab, Camouflage Evaluation Facility, Raincourt, Hydro-Environmental Chamber, Shade Room, Fiber Plant, Thermal & Flame Lab, and a Military Operation in Urban Terrain (MOUT) Lab/Facility. Currently, the NSSC is divided into three general areas; the industrial area to the north, the housing area to the east and the main research campus to the south (see Figure 2 – Existing Conditions- Natick Soldier Systems Center and Appendix A – Building Inventory for the description of individual buildings by location and number).

The NSSC has the following major partners:

Natick Soldier Research, Development and Engineering Center - The focus of the center is on research, development, testing and evaluation to maximize the warrior's survivability, sustainability, mobility, combat effectiveness and quality of life.

Figure 2 – Existing Conditions - Natick Soldier Systems Center



Existing Conditions

U.S Army Soldier Systems Center

Natick, Massachusetts

Integrated Logistics Support Center - The mission of this center is to provide logistical support for the Center's programs and product managers.

U. S. Army Research Institute of Environmental Medicine (USARIEM) - The USARIEM is a subordinate laboratory of the U.S. Army Medical Research and Materiel Command. The Institute's mission is to conduct basic and applied research to determine how exposure to extreme heat, severe cold, high terrestrial altitude, occupational tasks, physical training, deployment operations, and nutritional factors affect the health and performance of military personnel.

Program Manager Force Sustainment Systems (PM FSS) – The mission of PMFSS is to enhance the combat effectiveness and quality of life for the soldier by providing equipment, systems, and technical support to sustain and improve the environments in which they live, train, and operate. Program areas include Field Feeding Equipment, Field Services Equipment, Shelter Systems, Aerial Delivery Systems, and Force Provider.

Program Manager Soldier Clothing and Individual Equipment (PM SCIE) – The mission of PM SCIE is to support Soldiers in multiple operational environments and improve their survivability, safety, mobility, and sustainability by providing safe, durable, and operationally effective organizational clothing and individual equipment. PM SCIE provides technologically advanced tactical and environmental protective clothing, individual chemical protective gear, load-carrying systems, and personnel parachutes and other related air-drop equipment.

Navy Clothing and Textile Research Facility (NCTRF) - NCTRF conducts research, development, test and evaluation of Navy uniforms and protective clothing and provides engineering support in clothing, textiles, and related fields associated with service clothing and environmental protective clothing.

Coast Guard Clothing Design and Technical Office - This office designs and develops utility and organizational clothing items to better fit the needs of Coast Guard personnel today.

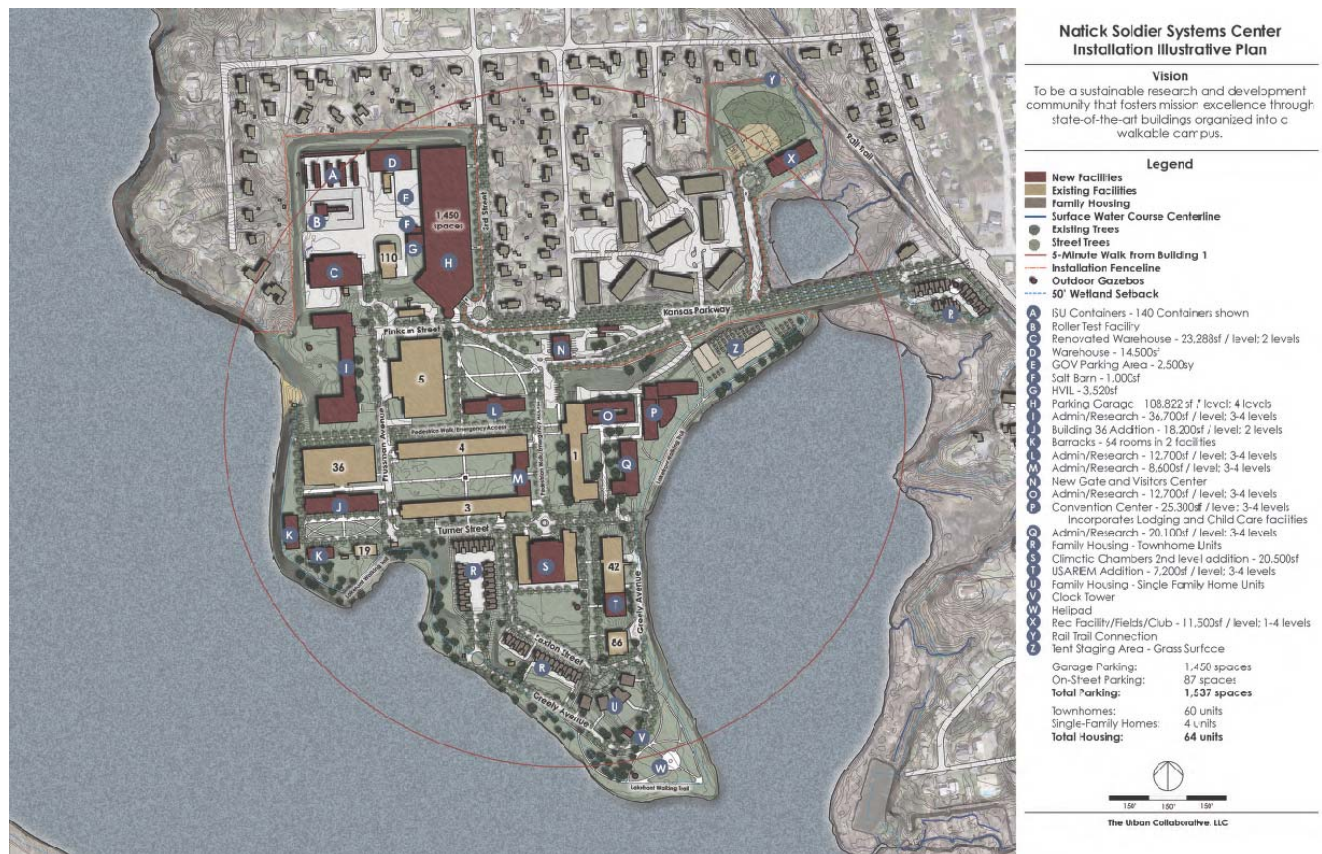
U.S. Army Installation Management Command (IMCOM) – The IMCOM provides the facilities, programs and services to support soldier and family readiness and well-being, leader and workforce development, installation readiness, safety, and security. It maintains the infrastructure and operational support for current and future mission requirements.

2.3 Proposed Action (Illustrative Plan – Preferred Alternative)

Alternative Six (Illustrative Plan – Preferred Alternative) was developed using a collaborative approach to identify and incorporate stakeholder preferences, identify and consider site limitations and benefits, and provide a community that maximizes mission readiness and environmental stewardship (see Figure 3 – Alternative Six (Illustrative Plan - Preferred Alternative)). The Preferred Alternative provides areas to accommodate new mission growth, provides additional administrative, storage, and parking facilities and incorporates all the known design requirements that were identified during the planning process. It also maintains the

installation design vision of a walkable campus environment, allows for the consolidation of housing onto the installation, provides a consolidated industrial area, perimeter and structured parking, and recreation and green space areas. This plan is based upon a 20 year planning window but is flexible enough to incorporate the Army's needs to grow and change over time. The plan will be reviewed on an as-needed basis but at a minimum of every 5 years to address necessary design changes.

Figure 3 – Alternative Six (Illustrative Plan – Preferred Alternative)



Source: 29 August 2011 Natick Soldiers Systems Center, Area Development Plans prepared by The Urban Collaborative, LLC

2.4 Alternative Analysis

Overview of the Master Plan Alternative Analysis - The Master Plan planning process was a collaborative effort between The Urban Collaborative, LCC (the design team), NSSC installation leaders and personnel, and local stakeholders (e.g., Town of Natick Selectman, Department of Public Works, etc.). Installation personnel and leaders initially met with the design team in April 2009 to develop a planning vision to guide the Master Plan process. The NSSC planning vision, as defined in the 17 December 2010 Natick Soldier Systems Center Area Development Plans Report Final (Natick Soldier Systems Center 2010a) was defined as “a **Sustainable Research and Development Community** that fosters mission excellence through

State-of-the-Art Buildings organized into a **Walkable Campus.**” The three design goals, incorporated in the vision statement, were further refined through the development of planning objectives. The goals and objectives used in the alternative analysis, as outlined in the Area Development Plans report (Natick Soldier Systems Center 2010a), are described in the following section:

Goal 1 - Sustainable Research and Development Community - Provide a community that maximizes mission readiness and environmental stewardship. The design objectives of this goal are to provide room for growth, common access areas, safe access, shaded parking, street trees and respectful development.

Goal 2 - State-of-the-Art Buildings - Prepare a plan that fosters mission excellence through attractive, excellently-equipped research and development facilities. The design objectives of this goal are to have windows that open wide, narrow wings, adaptable building, multi-use spaces, multi-story buildings, space for collaboration, open floor plans, adequate storage, and “main street” hallways.

Goal 3 - Walkable Campus - Provide a walkable community that is safe, convenient, and comfortable. The design objectives to achieve this goal are to have campus quads, comfortable courtyards, connected sidewalks, perimeter parking, views to nature, lakeside access, nearby recreation, variable entries and arcades.

An initial Framework Plan was developed to guide the alternative analysis process and identify critical environmental resources that needed to be considered (constraints and opportunities) in the planning process. The Framework Plan established three separate areas within the NSSC installation to accommodate the design of individual Area Development Plans (ADPs); the North Campus Industrial Area, the South Campus Research Area and the Housing Area (also called the Eastside Housing and Recreation Area) (see Figure 4 – Framework Plan). The Framework Plan also required Antiterrorism Force Protection (AT/FP) setbacks in the North Campus Industrial Area to comply with NSSC established security programs and defensive measures to protect personnel, information, and critical resources from local threats and vulnerabilities. Other initial environmental considerations included a no-build setback of 50 feet from open water resource areas, the avoidance of archaeologically sensitive resource areas, aesthetics considerations (viewshed), and environmental stewardship initiatives such as the maintenance of existing forested areas.

The resulting planning vision, goals, objectives and Framework Plan constraints and opportunities served as a guide to the NSSC Master Plan design effort and development of alternatives. The alternative analysis development process began at a design workshop held on 9-10 November 2009 with NSSC stakeholders. The workshop attendees worked in four separate groups and each developed an alternative (Alternatives One, Two Three and Four). In a hierarchal approach to refine the alternatives, Alternative Five was developed by incorporating the commonalities identified in Alternatives One through Four; the need for recreation areas, on-base housing, perimeter paths, structured parking, a consolidated industrial area, and green spaces at the NSSC facility. An additional design workshop was held on 16-17 November with

NSSC and local community stakeholders. Alternative Six (Illustrative Plan – Preferred Alternative) was developed by applying all the information gathered in the stakeholder meetings in addition to other pertinent force protection and code rules. The Illustrative Plan – Preferred Alternative was revised during the preparation of the Environmental Assessment (EA) to also include a setback from vegetated wetland resources (additional information provided in the Comparison of Alternatives in the next section).

Figure 4 – Framework Plan



Source: 17 December 2010 Natick Soldiers Systems Center, Area Development Plans prepared by The Urban Collaborative, LLC

Comparison of Alternatives - Alternatives for the proposed action include the No Action plan and six installation design Alternatives (including the Illustrative Plan - Preferred Alternative). Since the initial Framework Plan identified key environmental constraints; a 50 foot setback from open water, maintenance of existing forested areas and the avoidance of sensitive archaeological resources, the environmental effects were avoided for all Alternatives. Further revisions to include a 50' setback from vegetated wetlands avoided impacts to shallow marsh and forested wetlands for the planned in Eastside Housing and Recreations Area (see Environmental Setting Section 3.2.3 Wetlands for further details). Please note that there are areas within the 50' wetland setback buffer that are in development that will be redeveloped. However, Master Plan projects will not develop undisturbed areas within this 50' wetland setback buffer and there may be opportunities, as the redevelopment process continues, to restore some areas within the buffer. As such, the only variable in the alternative analysis was the number of historic buildings that would be demolished with each Alternative (with a range of 1 to 4 buildings with each Alternative) (see Table 1 - Comparison of Master Plan Design Alternatives One to Six for Historic Resources).

Table 1 – Comparison of Master Plan Design Alternatives One to Six for Historic Resources

	Alternative One	Alternative Two	Alternative Three	Alternative Four	Alternative Five	Alternative Six
Historic Resources	3 Historic buildings removed	4 Historic buildings removed	1 Historic buildings removed	2 Historic buildings removed	2 Historic buildings removed	3 Historic buildings removed

2.4.1 No Action - Should the NSSC not undertake the Master Planning process and evaluate future installation needs, the functional mission and future operations of the installation would be compromised over time. Although the No Action plan would not affect existing environmental resources, the No Action plan would not comply with Army regulations for installation Master Planning and maintaining compliance with new mandates for Homeland security. The No Action Plan is not a viable alternative.

2.4.2 Alternatives One, Two Three and Four – Alternatives One through Four were developed by installation stakeholders at a design workshop conducted on 9-10 November 2009. During the workshop, participants divided into four groups and developed four separate alternatives for the long-term development of the NSSC installation (Alternative One through Four). As part of the workshop, participants scored each alternative using a set of design principles for a sustainable research and development campus, walkable campus, state-of-the-art buildings and other attributes (e.g., phaseability, constructability, cost, etc.) to determine how well each alternative met the design principles. The percentage of the total possible score for Alternatives One, Two, Three and Four, was calculated to be 64.9%, 73.6%, 69.5% and 77.0%, respectively, which showed Alternative Four was slightly more favorable in meeting the design criteria. In general, Alternative One gains office space and storage space, provides no on-post

housing, and increases parking capacity; Alternative Two loses office space, gains storage space, provides housing, and increases parking capacity; Alternative Three gains both office and storage space, provides housing, but loses parking capacity; and Alternative Four gains office and storage space, provides housing, but loses a significant number of parking spaces. Commonalities found between the four alternatives included the recreation areas, on-base housing, perimeter paths, structured parking, a consolidated industrial area, and green spaces at the NSSC facility. All four alternatives had no impacts to terrestrial resources/land use, Federally protected Species, archaeological resources or wetland resources. In Alternative One, three historic buildings, Nos., 5, 7, and 16 would be demolished within the Quartermaster Research and Development Laboratory Historic District (QRDC). These are the Whittlesey Building (5), Prendergast Building (U.S. Navy Clothing and Textile Research Facility) (7), and the Beaudoin Building (16). Alternative Two has four historic buildings being demolished; the Whittlesey Building (5), Prendergast Building (7), the Johnson Barracks and Dining Facility (15), and the Beaudoin Building (16). In Alternative Three, only one building that is within the QRDC Historic District would be demolished, Building 16, the Beaudoin Building. Alternative Four proposes to demolish two historic buildings: the Johnson Barracks and Dining Facility (15) and the Beaudoin Building (16). See Figure 5 – Alternative One, Figure 6 – Alternative Two, Figure 7 – Alternative Three, and Figure 8 – Alternative Four for the alternative design configurations.

2.4.3 Alternative Five – The analysis of Alternatives One through Four determined many common themes; recreation areas, on-base housing, perimeter paths, structured parking, a consolidated industrial area, and green spaces at the NSSC installation. The desirable components of the previous alternatives were combined with the common themes found in the qualitative analysis of Alternative One through Four to develop Alternative Five. This hierarchal approach provided an improved alternative which included increased office space, gains storage space, provides housing, and increases parking capacity (see Figure 9 – Alternative Five). Alternative Five has no impacts to terrestrial resources/land use, Federally protected Species, archaeological resources or wetland resources (after the inclusion of the setback from vegetated wetlands). Alternative Five would require the demolition of buildings 15 and 16, the Johnson Barracks and Dining Facility, and the Beaudoin Building, respectively.

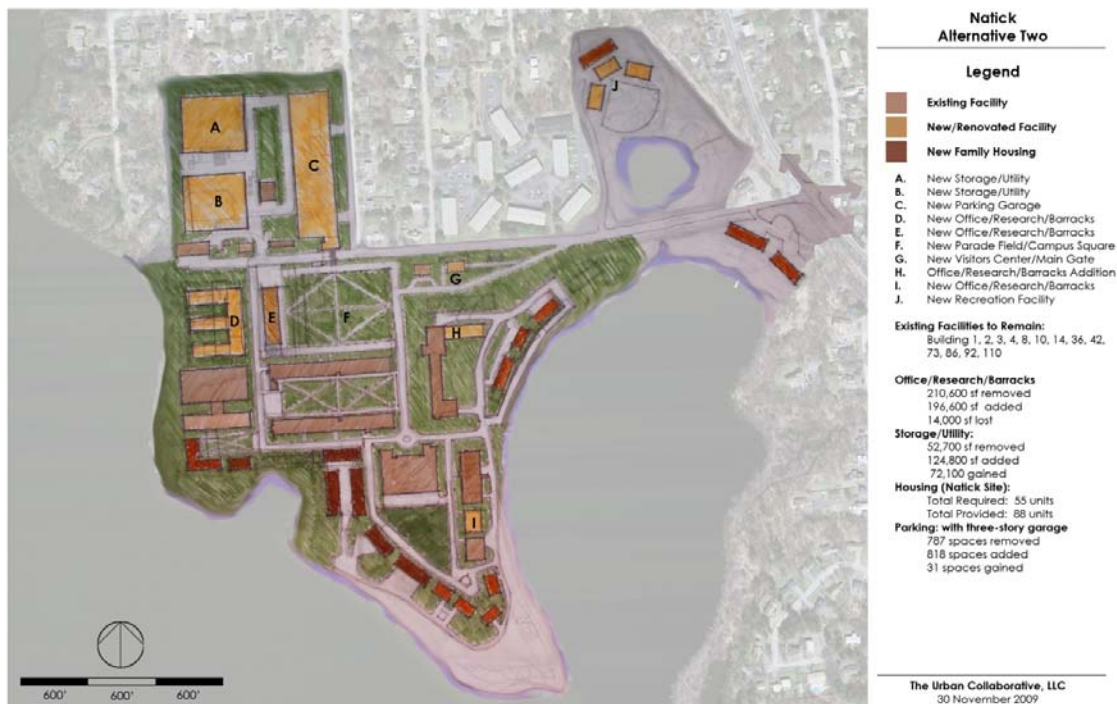
2.4.4 Alternative Six (Illustrative Plan – Preferred Alternative) - Alternative Five was further refined using additional information provided by the installation stakeholders. Alternative Six (Illustrative Plan - Preferred Alternative) reflects the most optimal plan for meeting future installation needs in consideration of project resources (such as natural, cultural, and man-made features) while meeting public, social, and economic demands (see Figure 3 - Alternative Six (Illustrative Plan – Preferred Alternative)). Alternative Six has no impacts to terrestrial resources/land use, Federally protected Species, archaeological resources or wetland resources. Alternative Six would impact three buildings which are contributing elements to the QRDC Historic District: the Special Test Building (7), the Enlisted Men's Barracks (15), and the Food Service Equipment Laboratory (16).

Figure 5 – Alternative One



Source: 17 December 2010 Natick Soldiers Systems Center, Area Development Plans prepared by The Urban Collaborative, LLC

Figure 6 – Alternative Two



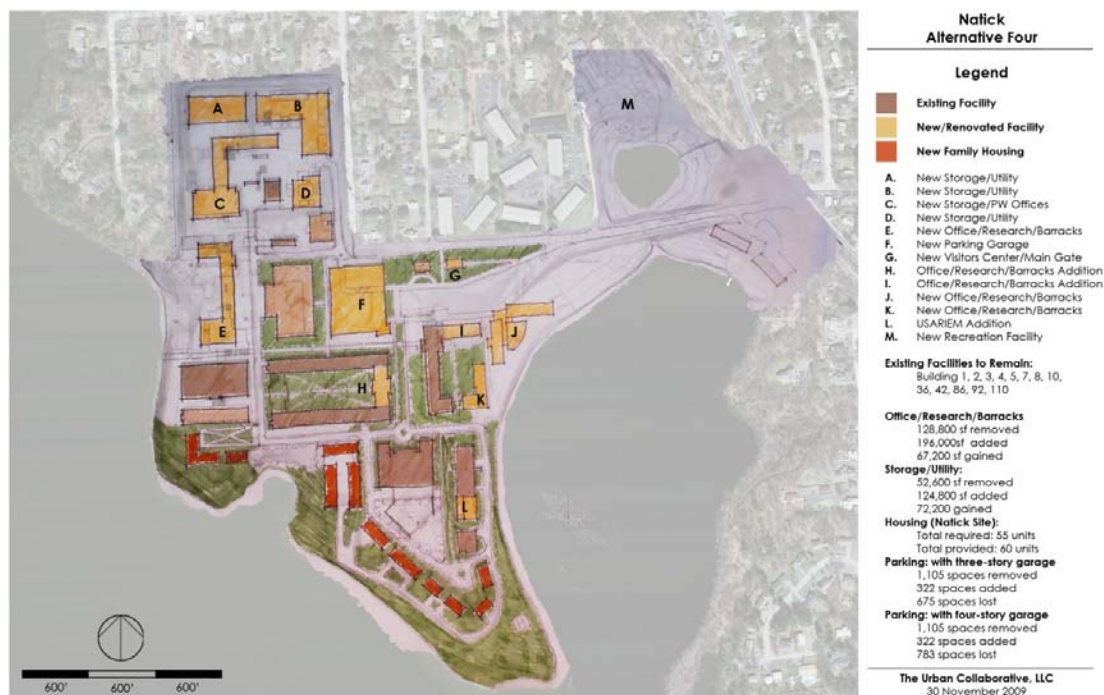
Source: 17 December 2010 Natick Soldiers Systems Center, Area Development Plans prepared by The Urban Collaborative, LLC

Figure 7 – Alternative Three



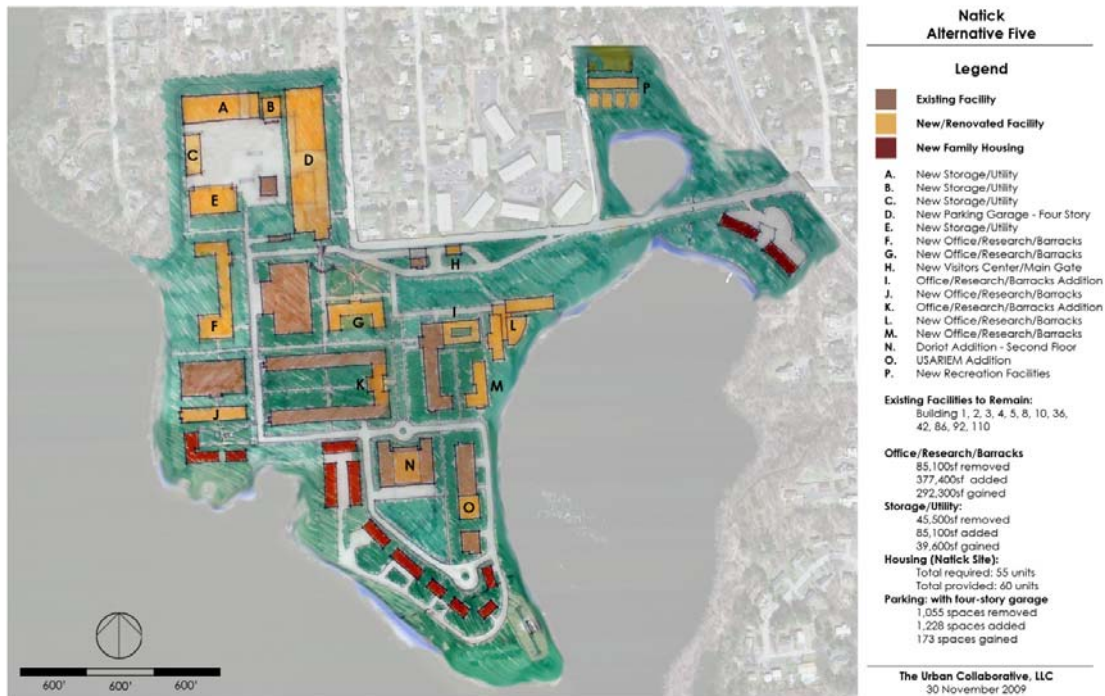
Source: 17 December 2010 Natick Soldiers Systems Center, Area Development Plans prepared by The Urban Collaborative, LLC

Figure 8 – Alternative Four



Source: 17 December 2010 Natick Soldiers Systems Center, Area Development Plans prepared by The Urban Collaborative, LLC

Figure 9 – Alternative Five



Source: 17 December 2010 Natick Soldiers Systems Center, Area Development Plans prepared by The Urban Collaborative, LLC

3.0 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

3.1 Physical Environment

3.1.1 Geology - The Natick Soldier Systems Center (NSSC) is located within the Appalachian Highlands Geologic Province along the boundary with the Atlantic Plain Geologic Province (US Geological Survey 2008a). Bedrock geology consists of Igneous and Metasedimentary rocks from the Paleozoic and Precambrian periods (US Geological Survey 2008b). Bedrock outcrops are common in the hilly areas of southern Natick although superficial deposits cover most of Natick's underlying bedrock. The dominant geologic feature of the area is stratified deposits of well compacted glacial till that occurs in the Sudbury River Watershed. These till deposits are the result of glaciers receding from the region.

The Natick area is characterized by low-elevation terrain that is generally less than 200 feet above mean sea level (msl). Elevations in Natick range from 410 feet at Pegan Hill, located in South Natick, to approximately 135 feet wetland areas, along the Charles River and at Lake Cochituate. Noteworthy topographic features of the town, starting from Pegan Hill in South Natick and moving north towards Route 9 include; Carver Hill (300 feet), Broad Hill (312 feet), Train Hill (300 feet), and Pleasant Hill (313 feet). In western Natick, Drury Hill (300 feet) is the dominant slope (Natick Soldier Systems Center 2004).

3.1.2 Soils - The Natural Resources Conservation Service Web Soil Survey for

Middlesex County, Massachusetts indicates that the NSSC installation is located primarily on urban land. Urban land consists of areas where the soil has been altered or obscured by buildings, industrial areas, paved parking lots, sidewalks, roads and railroad yards. These structures cover 75% or more of the surface area. Urban land areas in the county have slopes ranging from level to steep (US Department of Agriculture 2011).

A narrow area of Hinckley soil is also located on the NSSC installation along Lake Cochituate to the west. Hinckley soils are deep, excessively drained soils found on glacial outwash plains, kames, eskers, and terraces. The Hinckley soil found on-site is classified as having slopes of 15% to 25%. Typically, these soils are brittle or loose, gravelly and very gravelly sandy loam to loamy coarse sand surface soil and subsoil. In general, Hinckley soils have rapid permeability. The substratum consists of loose stratified sands and gravel at 12 to 30 inches, which have very rapid permeability. This soil type is classified as having severe limitations due to the slope (15% to 25%) and dryness of the soil that makes it generally unsuitable for cultivation (US Department of Agriculture 2011).

There is a narrow area of the Deerfield soil located along Lake Cochituate to the south and southeast of the installation. The Deerfield series consists of deep, moderately well drained soils, which are found on glacial outwash plains, terraces, and deltas. The Deerfield soil series at the NSSC has a loamy fine sand-to-sand surface layer with 0 to 3% slopes. The permeability of the soil is rapid to very rapid. The seasonally high water table ranges from 18 to 36 inches.

The Federal Farmland Protection Policy Act (FPPA) of 1981 was enacted to minimize the extent to which federal programs contribute to the irreversible conversion of farmland to nonagricultural uses. The Act applies to farmland with soil types classified as prime, unique, or of statewide or local importance. The Deerfield series is recognized as a “Farmland of State or Local Importance” soil for agricultural purposes (NEsoil.com 2009). These soils do not meet the definition of “Prime Farmland” soils but still may be important for the production of high yield crops and other agricultural purposes. Irrigation is needed for optimal yield and the seasonal high water table may delay some practices during the spring and limit root growth. It is well suited for woodland productivity.

Soil contamination has been documented with various constituents of concern in site investigations at the NSSC installation over the last few decades. Contaminated soils were excavated and removed at the Building T-25 site in 1997, the Former Gym site in the spring/summer of 2002, the Building 62 and 68 site during the fall of 2005, the Boiler Plant (Building 19) site in 1990, 1995, and 2000 and the Building 14 and former Building 13 site in 2007 (see Figure 10 – Response Action Locations) (US Environmental Protection Agency 2011a). More detailed information about site contamination can be found in Section **3.1.4 Hazardous Materials**.

3.1.3 Climate - There has been a large temperature range and an equal distribution of precipitation in Natick over the years. The prevailing wind is from the west, with

an average velocity of 10 to 13 miles per hour (HydroGeoLogic 2002 in NSSC 2004). Average monthly temperatures in Natick range from 28.2 degrees in January to 72.0 degrees in July (National Climatic Data Center 1990 in Natick Soldier Systems Center 2004). The winters are moderately cold and wet. The last killing frost generally occurs before May 10, and the earliest fall frost usually comes in late September or early October. The summers are typically warm and moist with some periods of high humidity. The normal annual precipitation is 44.23 inches (Citizen Information Service Website 2002 in Natick Soldier Systems Center 2004). The climate is subject to fluctuating influences of polar, tropical, marine, and continental air masses. The frequent passage of storm fronts through the region creates storms and extended periods of cloudiness, drizzle, and low visibility (HydroGeoLogic 2002 in Natick Soldier Systems Center 2004).

3.1.4 Hazardous Materials - The Final Site Assessment Decision for the NSSC was completed on May 10, 1993 and the NSSC was identified as a Federal Superfund Site and placed on the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (USEPA) National Priority List for cleanup in 1994. At the present time, the USEPA has determined that potential or actual human exposures are under control at this site under current conditions. The USEPA is still working in cooperation with the NSSC to determine whether contaminated groundwater migration is under control (US Environmental Protection Agency 2011a). There are no Land Use Controls (LUCs) specified by the USEPA for activities above contaminated groundwater plumes however, there is a directive that requires that exposure to contaminated groundwater be prevented. A Restoration Advisory Board (RAB) was established in 1995 and to review documents and provide citizen input to the restoration process (Natick Soldier Systems Center 2009b). In recent years, the RAB has met two to five times annually.

Soil, groundwater, and surface water are contaminated with various Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs), naphthalene, Freon 113, and a variety of heavy metals such as barium, mercury, arsenic, copper, chromium, lead, and zinc which have been found in various investigations. This site is being addressed through several long-term remedial action phases focusing on the cleanup of the T-25 site, Supply Wells (Buildings 63, 2 and 45), the Boiler Plant (Building 19), Buildings 22 and 36, Building 14 and the former Building 13, Buildings 62 and 68 and remaining investigational areas of the site. Elevated levels of polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) had also detected in sediments in Pegan Cove in Lake Cochituate and were likely related to a release from an electrical transformer on the installation in the mid-1980s (see Figure 10 – Response Action Locations). Sediments in Pegan Cove were removed in 2010 as required by the Record of Decision (ROD) signed in September 2009. (The ROD documents the final decision regarding the cleanup of the site pursuant to the Superfund cleanup process.) Table 2 outlines installation contamination at the Natick Soldier Systems Center (NSSC) and vicinity as described by the USEPA Waste Site Cleanup & Reuse in New England, Natick Laboratory Army Research, Development and Engineering Center website (US Environmental Protection Agency 2011a).

3.1.5 Cross Boundary Issues – Pursuant to AR 200-20 Real Property Master Planning for Army Installations Section 3-2 b. (6), the environmental effect of encroachments on

installations' boundaries (that may impact the future viability of the installation to perform assigned mission) plus annoyances such as noise and dust need to be considered in the planning process. The NSSC is bounded on the east, south and west by Lake Cochituate which prevents property encroachment in those areas. Although the northern portion of the NSSC facility is bounded by residential development, a security fence (and earthen berm in some locations) bound the perimeter of the NSSC facility. This observable demarcation of the property boundary has prevented problems with encroachment in the northern portion of the facility.

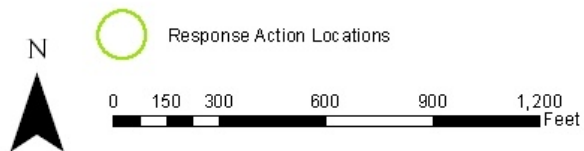
Although some testing facilities involve noise, such as Building 77 – the Combustion Test Facility in the North Campus Industrial Area, few noise complaints have been generated. Testing facilities that create noise are insulated to be noise proof and therefore, cross boundary noise issues have not been problematic at the NSSC installation. Construction of the proposed project could cause a temporary increase in construction related noise and a reduction in local ambient air quality because of fugitive dust and emissions generated by construction equipment. The extent of dust generated would depend on the level of construction activity and dryness. Proper dust suppression techniques would be employed to avoid creating a nuisance for nearby residents during dry and windy weather.

3.2 Water Resources

3.2.1 Surface Water - The NSSC is located adjacent to Lake Cochituate which has a surface area of 625 acres and a depth of 65.6 feet at its deepest point. The lake is divided into three main ponds with two other connected ponds. Dudley pond is located immediately north of Lake Cochituate and Fisk Pond lies immediately south of the lake (see Figure 1 – Location Map). Cochituate Brook, the outlet for Lake Cochituate, located in Framingham, flows approximately 0.6 miles into the Sudbury River, which merges with the Assabet River approximately 16 miles downstream to form the Concord River. The Concord River flows into the Merrimack River, which discharges into the Atlantic Ocean approximately 37 miles downstream.

Natick is divided between the Charles River Watershed in the eastern and southern portions of town, and the Concord River Watershed in the west and north. The Lake Cochituate Watershed covers approximately 17 square miles in the towns of Ashland, Framingham, Natick, Sherborn, and Wayland in Middlesex County. Water bodies and associated wetlands cover about 13.5% of the total area of the Town of Natick. Land use within the watershed consists of residential, industrial and urban. Lake Cochituate State Park owns a small margin of land surrounding the majority of the lake.

Figure 10 – Response Action Locations



Response Action Locations
U.S. Army Soldier Systems Center
Natick, Massachusetts

Table 2 – Response Action Overview

T-25 Area	<p>The Army began an in-depth study of soil and groundwater contamination at the T-25 Area in 1993. Studies completed in 1993 thru 1996 have help determine cleanup strategies for containing contaminant migration via an onsite pump and treat system. The Army is currently operating the pump and treat system and monitoring the groundwater in the T- Area. A Record of Decision (ROD) for groundwater was signed in September 2001. The ROD calls for the continued operation of the existing treatment system. The Army is updating plans for operations and maintenance and long term monitoring of the system and surrounding groundwater. Additional extraction well installation took place in fall 2002 to more fully contain the contaminated water on post. Additional monitoring wells were installed in 2003 to monitor the contamination north of the site. The treatment system was upgraded to treat the additional water. A pilot study is being implemented during 2006-2010 to determine if augmented bioremediation will be effective. Soil at the T-25 Area was determined to not require action. A No Further Action ROD was signed in September 2008.</p>
Former Gym Site	<p>The Army began an extensive investigation of groundwater and soil contamination at the Former Gym Site in the fall of 1997. This investigation will lead to the selection of cleanup remedies for the area. An excavation of contaminated soils at the former gym site was completed in spring 2002. A report on the confirmation sampling was submitted in October 2002. An additional monitoring well was installed in 2003. The Army monitored the groundwater contamination for several additional rounds and determined the removal action was successful. Soils were also excavated at the Buildings 62 & 68 site during the fall of 2005 and included in the Former Proposed Gymnasium ROD for no further action which was signed in the fall of 2007.</p>
Supply Well (Buildings 63, 2 and 45)	<p>The Army began an investigation of groundwater contamination at the Army Supply Well (Building 63) in the fall of 1997. The Army discontinued using the on-post water supply well and now contracts with the town of Natick for potable water. The Army has found additional groundwater contamination near the wells and Buildings 45 and 2. The Army is currently implementing a pilot study to determine groundwater capture effectiveness with an extraction system. Contaminated water is being treated at the T-25 area treatment plant. Additional well head treatment was implemented in August 2008 to treat a contaminant that is not treated by the treatment plant.</p>
Building 22 and 36	<p>This area is currently being investigated. Soil, Sediment and groundwater samples have been taken. The Army submitted a</p>

	Remedial Investigation Report for the investigations at Building 22 in 2003. The Army is currently implementing an optimization study to determine groundwater capture effectiveness with an extraction system. Contaminated water is being treated at the T-25 area treatment plant.
Boiler Plant (Building 19)	This area is currently being investigated. Soil, Sediment and groundwater samples have been taken. The Army performed a soil removal action at the Boiler Plant, with a closeout report provided in the fall of 2001. Soil at the Boiler Plant has been determined to not require action. A No Further Action ROD was signed in September 2008.
Pegan Cove/Main Outfall	Tier I, II, & III Ecological Risk Assessments was performed for the sediments and surface water at these areas. The Army submitted the Tier III report in 2003. The Tier I & II indicated a probability of risk to the benthic community and a potential for aquatic food chain exposures to occur in the sediments, but no unacceptable risk for exposures to the surface water. The Tier III concluded that concentrations of chemicals of ecological concern in fish and in the sediment-based aquatic food chain do not pose unacceptable risk to wildlife. A human health fish consumption pathway evaluation completed in 2005 verified the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) fish consumption restriction for sensitive populations. Additional fish tissue studies were conducted in fall 2007. A ROD was signed in September 2009 for the Sediment Area. The Army has removed contaminated sediment in Pegan Cove during 2010.
Soil Areas	The Army has identified several other areas of possible contamination at the site as part of their Master Environmental Plan and Installation Action Plan. A ROD for No Further Action for the soil at the T-25 area, the Boiler Plant (Building 19) and at Buildings 13 and 14 was signed in Fall of 2008.

Source: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA). 2011a. Website entitled Waste Site Cleanup & Reuse in New England, Natick Laboratory Army Research, Development and Engineering Center.

As stated previously, the NSSC was identified as a Federal Superfund Site and placed on the USEPA National Priority List for cleanup in 1994. As part of the Superfund process, the Army has conducted Tier I, II and III Ecological Risk Assessments for sediments and surface waters in the Main Outfall area and in Lake Cochituate with oversight from the USEPA, the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MA DEP), the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (MA DCR) and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). Elevated levels of polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) were detected in sediments in Pagan Cove and were likely related to a release from an electrical transformer on the installation in the mid-1980s. The Army removed contaminated sediments in Pegan Cove during 2010 pursuant to the remedial action plan documented in the Record of Decision (ROD) signed in

September 2009. In addition, to improve stormwater quality and to minimize future impacts to Lake Cochituate, all active stormwater outfalls were fitted with oil-water separators in the 1990's. At the present time, there are no known current sources of PCBs to Lake Cochituate from the installation (Natick Soldier Systems Center 2009a).

The Tier I, II and III Ecological Risk Assessments, completed in 2009, indicate that it is safe for adults and children to swim, wade, and boat along the NSSC shoreline; the risks of eating fish caught near the NSSC shoreline are slightly higher than the USEPA acceptable range; and the ecological risks due to contamination from the NSSC-associated sediment are negligible for bird and mammal species (Natick Soldier Systems Center 2010b). The Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) instituted a fish consumption restriction for sensitive populations in May of 1996 for Lake Cochituate (MA Department of Public Health 2011) which is still in effect.

An USEPA National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit provides authorization for a municipality or public entity to discharge surface waters through a Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4). Each regulated MS4 entity is required to develop and implement a stormwater management program (SWMP) to reduce the contamination of stormwater runoff and prohibit illicit discharges. The NSSC provides annual reports to the USEPA with regard to its Phase II Small MS4 General Permit which was issued in 2003 and is now in its eighth year (Permit Number MAR042008) (USEPA 2011c). The April 2010 annual report for Permit Year 7 (Reporting Period April 1, 2009 to March 31, 2010) demonstrated a number of initiatives for stormwater improvements and outlined progress and activities planned for the future (Natick Soldier Systems Center 2010c).

USEPA Region 1 issued the General Permit for stormwater discharges from Small MS4s on May 1, 2003. The EPA is currently in the process of replacing the Small MS4s General Permit with three separate Small MS4 General Permits: one for Operators located in the State of New Hampshire, a second for Operators located in the North Coastal watersheds of Massachusetts, and a third for Operators located in the Interstate, Merrimack and South Coastal watersheds of Massachusetts (the Natick facility is located within the Merrimack watershed). This draft permit requires Small MS4s Operators to continue to implement the Stormwater Management Programs required by the previous permit and to incorporate additional applicable requirements as will be outlined in the final permit (US Environmental Protection Agency 2011d). Once the USEPA concludes the process of updating the General Permit for the Merrimack and South Coastal Small MS4 General Permit (the Public Comment period ended on May 11, 2011), the Regional Administrator will issue a final permit decision. The Notice of Availability of the final permit will be published in the Federal Register. To obtain coverage, the NSSC will be required to submit a new Notice of Intent (NOI) to the USEPA for the permit for which they are eligible (US Environmental Protection Agency 2011d).

3.2.2 Groundwater - The Town of Natick drinking water supply is derived from aquifers and reservoirs in the surrounding region. The public water supply system consists

of two reservoirs, 10 wells, and a distribution of water mains located throughout Natick. The unconsolidated aquifer in Natick is composed of moderately well sorted silty sands, sandy silts, and silty clays that lie beneath poorly, sorted, coarse to fine-grained sands (Natick Soldier Systems Center 2004). The NSSC facility is located approximately 2,500 feet southeast of the town of Natick's Springvale Municipal Water Supply Well Field (Springvale Well Field). The ground water beneath the entire NSSC facility has been designate as a Zone II for the Town of Natick Springvale Municipal Well System (Natick Soldier Systems Center 2007).

As stated previously, the NSSC was added to the USEPA National Priority List in 1994. The Army began in-depth studies of soil and groundwater contamination which have supported the formulation of clean up strategies for containing contaminant migration. An investigation of the T-25 former bulk hazardous materials storage site began in 1993 which resulted in development of the pump and treat system that is still operational. The Army discontinued the use of on-post water and contracted with the Town of Natick for a source of potable water for the NSSC facility after groundwater investigation, which began in 1997 in the Supply Well Area (Buildings 63, 2 and 45), showed well-water contamination. A ROD was signed in 2001 which included a cooperative agreement between the Army and the Town of Natick for a one-time grant of \$3.1 million to the town to construct and operate the municipal Springvale Water Treatment Plant. The 2001 ROD prohibited all on-post use of groundwater that would cause ingestion and/or dermal exposure to contaminated groundwater. This was implemented in part by contracting for potable water from the Town of Natick and also by prohibiting any new projects on post that involve the use of groundwater at the NSSC. This prohibition was incorporated into the Master Plan.

Ground water use restrictions are affected through a municipal ordinance that covers the area where contaminated ground water has been found in areas beyond the NSSC facility boundary. More specifically, a town of Natick Board of Health regulation prohibits both the installation of new private drinking water wells and the use of existing private drinking water wells in certain areas to prevent any access or exposure to contaminated ground water. On February 24, 1999, the town of Natick Board of Health published an amendment to its regulations that state:

Private wells for drinking water shall not be allowed where a public water supply is available in sufficient quantity and pressure so as to meet U.S. and Massachusetts safe drinking water standards.

This restriction was imposed within the area bounded by North Main Street (Route 27), Lake Cochituate, West Central Street (Route 135), and the Massachusetts Turnpike (Route 90). An annual certification is required both by the town and by the installation environmental office that these restrictions are in place and are being enforced.

During 2007, upgrades were made to the T-25 Area Treatment Plant in Building 94 to accommodate additional contributions from new groundwater extraction wells, which were

constructed and tested during 2006/2007 to provide containment of groundwater plumes with tetrachloroethene (PCE) and trichloroethene (TCE) contamination in the Buildings 22 and 36 Area and the Buildings 63, 2 and 45 Area. There is also a small area of TCE groundwater contamination in the Main Outfall area which is also being monitored (see Figure 11 – Groundwater Contamination).

The progress of groundwater cleanup at NSSC is measured through evaluation of the capture zone produced by the extraction wells, and by assessing the results of long term monitoring. Continued monitoring in October 2010 demonstrated that the groundwater extraction system is capturing groundwater within the T-25 area, Buildings 22 and 36 and Buildings 63, 2 and 45 Areas (Natick Soldier Systems Center 2011a).

3.2.3 Wetlands - The development of wetlands is dependent on many physical and chemical parameters with the dominant successional force being soil moisture. Wetland have many beneficial functions including the protection of public and private water supply, protection of surface and ground waters, nutrient retention, shoreline anchoring and dissipation of erosive forces, pollution prevention, fisheries and wildlife habitat, and aquifer recharge. In addition, wetlands have become increasingly important to those species that are generally considered upland species, such as white-tailed deer, as upland habitat becomes developed in urban/suburban areas.

Wetlands in the vicinity of the NSSC installation are generally associated with surface water bodies (streams, lakes and ponds) due to urban/suburban development in the Natick area. According to a wetland delineation conducted by the NSSC in 2012, wetlands within installation boundaries include a narrow area along the periphery of Lake Cochituate, an area surrounding Little Roundy Pond and along the stream that flows into Little Roundy Pond (see Figure 12 – Wetland Resource Areas). Within this wetland boundary are several different types of wetlands including the Open Water of Lake Cochituate, which surrounds the NSSC South Campus Research Area to the east, south and west; the Open Water of Little Roundy Pond; and shallow marsh and deciduous forested wetland areas in the Eastside Housing and Recreation Area). There is a culvert under Kansas Street that allows drainage from Little Roundy Pond into Lake Cochituate and a small stream located along the eastern border of the Eastside Recreation and Housing Area. There are no vernal pools found on the installation. Vernal pools are depressions or low areas that contain water for only part of the year that serve as breeding habitat for amphibian species.

3.3 Biological Resources

Currently, the broad area that encompasses the NSSC features a combination of northeastern hardwood deciduous and coniferous forest, wooded swamps and wetlands, developed urban land and open fields. Wooded areas are comprised primarily of red oak (*Quercus rubra*), white pine (*Pinus strobus*), maple (*Acer* spp.), ash (*Fraxinus* sp.), and gray birch (*Betula populifolia*). Grass fields have a combination of goldenrods (*Solidago* spp.), asters (*Aster* spp.), and upland grasses (Poaceae) and shrubs such as roses (*Rosa* sp.), brambles (*Rubus* spp.), honeysuckle (*Lonicera* spp.), and witch hazel (*Hamamelis virginiana*). Herbaceous plants

in the area include club moss (*Lycopodium* sp.), common dewberry (*Rubus* sp.), and goldenrod. Mammalian species include white-tailed deer (*Odocoileus virginiana*), raccoon (*Procyon lotor*), skunk (*Mephitis mephitis*), gray squirrel (*Sciurus carolinensis*), red fox (*Vulpes vulpes*), opossum (*Didelphis marsupialis*), and moles. Birds such as sparrows, northern cardinal (*Cardinalis cardinalis*), hawks, ducks and geese, herons, and ring-necked pheasant (*Phasianus colchicus*) have been known to inhabit the area. In addition, reptiles and amphibians present include frogs, salamanders, and snakes.

Lake Cochituate supports a variety of fresh water species, including carp, bass, perch, bluegill and pickerel. Periodically, the Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife stock the lake with trout (MA Department of Fish and Wildlife 2011). Waterfowl of many types use the lake for resting, feeding, or breeding, with the largest transient population being found during spring and fall migration periods. As stated previously, the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) instituted a fish consumption restriction for sensitive populations in May of 1996 for Lake Cochituate (MA Department of Public Health 2011) which is still in effect.

Non-native invasive plants include trees, shrubs, herbs, vines, and aquatic vegetation that have been introduced into a new location by human activity that have the capability to flourish in the non-native environment through the lack of natural controls, the ability for prolific growth or rapid reproductive capabilities. Some species found on the NSSC installation, such as honeysuckle, have been introduced through a variety of means (e.g. landscaping, land disturbance, erosion control). Invasive plants are among the greatest threats to the integrity of natural areas. They disrupt the natural ecosystem by displacing more diverse and valuable plant communities. In keeping with the NSSC stewardship responsibilities, the landscaping plan for the NSSC Master Plan should avoid the use of plants that are considered invasive in Massachusetts as listed in the document entitled The Evaluation of Non-Native Plant Species for Invasiveness in Massachusetts (Massachusetts Invasive Plant Advisory Group 2005).

3.4 Endangered and Threatened Species

This project was reviewed for the presence of Federally-listed or proposed, threatened or endangered species or critical habitat per instructions provided on the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's New England Field Office website: <http://www.fws.gov/newengland/EndangeredSpec-Consultation.htm>. Based on the information currently available, no Federally-listed or proposed, threatened or endangered species or critical habitat under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service are known to occur in the project area. Preparation of a Biological Assessment or further consultation under section 7 of the Endangered Species Act is not required pursuant to a letter dated 3 January 2011. No further Endangered Species Act coordination of this type is necessary for a period of one year from the date of this letter, unless additional information on listed or proposed species becomes available.

Figure 11 – Groundwater Contamination

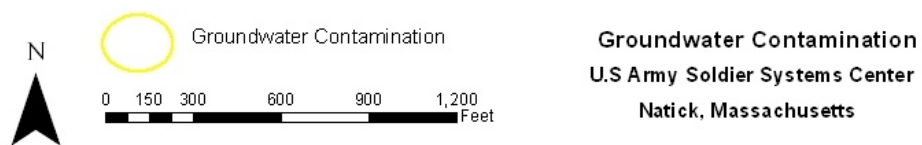
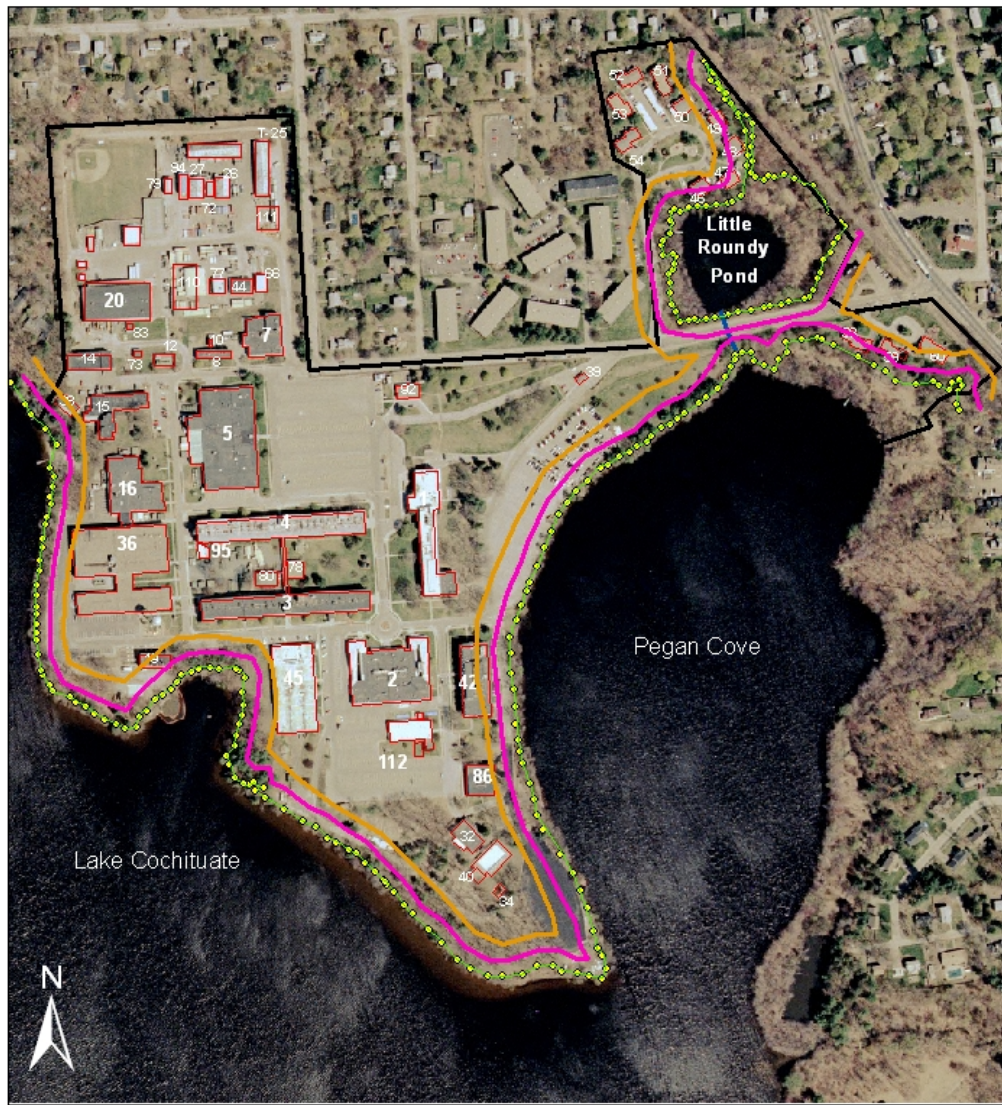


Figure 12 – Wetland Delineation and Setbacks



0 100 200 400 600 800
Feet

Wetland Resource Areas
U.S Army Soldier Systems Center
Natick, Massachusetts

- Wetland Line
- Wetland Flag
- 50 Ft. Setback
- 100 Ft. Setback

— Natick Soldier Systems Center Boundary

Based Upon the Natick Soldier Systems Center 2012 Wetland Delineation

The Massachusetts Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program (NHESP), in a

letter dated 6 July 2011, indicated that Priority Habitat 200 (PH200) and Estimated Habitat 95 (EH 95) are located within the project area vicinity (NHESP 2011). Priority Habitat is based on the known geographical extent of habitat for all state-listed rare species, both plants and animals, and is regulated under the Massachusetts Endangered Species Act (MESA). Estimated Habitats are a sub-set of the Priority Habitats, and are based on the geographical extent of habitat of state-listed rare wetlands wildlife and is codified under the Wetlands Protection Act. It should be noted that these habitat designations are reviewed and updated approximately every four years.

The NHESP database indicates that Eastern Pondmussle (*Ligumia nasuta*) have been found in the vicinity of the NSSC as based upon habitat maps dated September 24, 2008 (see Figure 13 – Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program Habitats). Based upon a telecom with Kristin Black of the NHESP and Judith Johnson of the Army Corps of Engineers on 19 July 2011, an updated edition of the NHESP rare species habitat maps is due to be published around January of 2012. However, Ms. Black noted that the Priority Habitat and Estimated Habitat designations in the NSSC area will not change. Therefore, this information on state rare species habitats in the NSSC area is viable until approximately January of 2016.

The Eastern Pondmussel is listed as a species of “Special Concern” which is defined as “native species which have been documented by biological research or inventory to have suffered a decline that could threaten the species if allowed to continue unchecked, or which occur in such small numbers or with such restricted distribution or specialized habitat requirements that they could easily become threatened within Massachusetts.” The Eastern Pondmussel is a medium sized freshwater mussel that may exceed six inches. It is distributed throughout Atlantic coastal drainages from Virginia to New Hampshire and in the eastern Great Lakes region. It inhabits streams, rivers lakes and ponds but exhibits no distinct preference for substrate, depth and flow of water. Eastern Pondmussels are sedentary filter feeders and as such, the species is vulnerable to degraded water quality such as sedimentation, nutrient enrichment and alteration of habitat (encroachment, invasive species, etc.) or alteration of flow regimes (Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program 2011a).

3.5 Socio-Economic Resources

As of the 2000 census, there were 32,170 people, 13,080 households, and 8,528 families residing in the town of Natick. The racial makeup of the town was 90.02% White, 1.6% African American, 0.1% Native American, 3.9% Asian, 0.1% Pacific Islander, 3.9% Hispanic or Latino, 0.8% from other races, and 1.6% from two or more races. There were 13,080 households out of which 65.2 were family households (with children) and 34.8 were non-family households. The average household size was 2.4 and the average family size was 3.0. Of the town population, 47.3% were male and 52.7% were female; 7.4% were under 5 years, 16.9 were 5 years to 19 years, 61.3% were 20 to 64 years and 14.3% were over 65 years (Mass.Gov 2011).

In 2009 inflation-adjusted dollars, the median household income for the town of Natick was \$86,583, the median family was \$111,189 and the per capita income was \$44,221. About 2.1% of families and 3.4% of the population were below the poverty level (U.S. Census Bureau

2011). Natick is largely a middle class town suburban town with some areas of semi-rural affluence.

The NSSC has 124 buildings located on 174 acres in the Town of Natick and neighboring communities. The main campus is 78 acres. Based upon January 2012 population information, the NSSC has a total workforce of 1,698. The NSSC public relations office reported that the NSSC facility infuses more than \$135 million annually into the local economy through installation salaries, utilities and local contracts (Wikipedia.org 2011).

3.6 Historic and Archaeological Resources

The 1997 Cultural Resource Management Plan (CRMP) identified five archaeologically sensitive acres within the NSSC facility (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New England District, 1997). These sensitive areas consisted of undeveloped land bordering Lake Cochituate in the southeastern tip and southwestern edge of the facility. The 1997 CRMP recommended that an intensive archaeological survey be conducted in these sensitive areas to locate, identify, and assess the presence of any undocumented sites.

The 2009 intensive archaeological survey (Banister et al. 2009) identified three previously undocumented pre-contact Native American archaeological sites designated NSSC Site Locus 1, Locus 2, and Locus 3. Locus 1 was identified in the southwest part of the facility, and Locus 2 and Locus 3 were identified to the southeast in undeveloped wooded areas adjacent to existing parking lots, drives, and buildings. All three site areas yielded chipping debris, the byproducts of Native American stone tool-making, and Locus 1 and Locus 3 also contained chipped stone tool artifacts. Of the three, Locus 1 and Locus 3 were considered potentially significant archaeological resources, under Criterion D of the National Register of Historic Places (National Register). Locus 2 was not considered a significant archaeological site and no further work was recommended.

The 2010 site examination investigations were conducted for the NSSC Site Locus 1 and Site Locus 3 to determine their significance and National Register eligibility. Based on the recovered cultural material assemblages, Locus 1 and Locus 3 were interpreted as areas where chipped stone tool manufacture and maintenance were the primary on-site activities. Because of their limited information content, neither site was determined to be eligible for the National Register and no further archaeological investigations for the NSSC facility were recommended.

Figure 13 – Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program Priority Habitats



The NSSC facility contains one historic district with thirteen individual contributing resources and 25 non-contributing individual resources (Figure 14 - Quartermaster Research and

Development Center). The facility was determined eligible for the National Register in 2007 in consultation with the Massachusetts State Historic Preservation Officer (MA SHPO).

The Quartermaster Research and Development Center (QRDC) Historic District encompasses approximately 30 of the facility's 78 acres. The QRDC has unique historical significance because of its historical associations with the Cold War (1946 – 1989) and as a preserved example of a Cold War military research complex and is eligible for the National Register under Criteria A and C at the national level. Under Criterion A, the QRDC Historic District illustrates the Army's historic and current response to the need to develop measured scientific responses in the form of clothing, food, and equipment for use in fighting global wars. Under Criterion C, the historic district represents a state-of-the-art architectural response to a host of exotic needs such as the testing and disposal of toxic chemicals and the ability to grow fungi, molds, and food bacteria. The Ballinger Company's design for the original buildings within the complex provides especially strong support systems to hold a changing variety of test equipment housed within a community of functional, sleek, and modern buildings of the International Style. The facility retains a high degree of integrity in location, design, setting, materials, feeling, workmanship, and association (Griffin, Nolte and Steinback 2001).

The contributing resources are as follows:

Building 1, the Administration Building (now known as Carney Hall)
Building 2, the Doriot Climatic Chambers
Building 3, the Research Building (now referred to as MacGillivray Hall)
Building 4, the Development Building (now MacArthur Hall)
Building 5, the Technology Engineering Building (now referred to as the Whittlesey Building)
Building 7, the Special Test Building (now referred to as the Prendergast Building or the U.S. Navy Clothing and Textile Research Facility)
Building 8, the Hazardous Research Building (now referred to as the Nee Building)
Building 15, the Enlisted Men's Barracks (now known as the Johnson Barracks and Dining Facility)
Building 16, the Radiation Laboratory (now the Beaudoin Building)
Building 19, the Boiler Pump House
Building 36, the Engineering Laboratory (now called the Department of Defense Combat Feeding Program Building or Bainbridge Building)
Building 42, the U.S. Army Research Institute of Environmental Medicine Laboratory (USARIEM, also known as the Wood Building)
Building 71, the Central Flag Pole

One historic building has been demolished, Building 6, the Guard House. The Guard House was a contributing resource within the QRDC Historic District. This property was demolished in 2008, and replaced with a new pre-fabricated structure that met Force Protection/Anti-terrorism requirements. Photographic documentation of the original guard house was completed and accepted by the MA SHPO prior to demolition.

An Integrated Cultural Management Plan (ICRMP) was completed in 2012. The ICRMP details the actions needed when working in the QRDC Historic District. Photographic documentation was also completed in 2012. This ensures that the existing condition of the QRDC Historic District structures are documented prior to any actions or construction being proposed in the Master Plan.

As part of the ICRMP and Master Plan effort, a Programmatic Agreement was executed between the Natick SSC facility and the MA SHPO (Appendix F). Certain activities at the facility are exempt from further MA SHPO review. Other, more substantial activities being considered in the Master Plan will still require review, and perhaps, mitigation as detailed in the Programmatic Agreement (Appendix F).

4.0 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

4.1 Physical Environment

Deerfield Loamy Sand, 0-3% soil exist is present on NSSC property which is listed as a “Farmland of State or Local Importance” soil for agricultural purposes (NEsoil.com 2009). The Farmland Protection Policy Act (FPPA) applies to farmland with soil types listed as prime, unique, or of statewide or local importance, but pursuant to 7 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Ch. VI (1-1-03 Editions) Section 658.2 Definitions. (a) “Farmland” does not include land already in or committed to urban development or water storage. Correspondence with Al Averill, Assistant State Soil Scientist at the Natural Resources Conservation Service confirmed NSSC property is considered “urban development” based upon the density of structures on the site and as such, the FPPA is not applicable (Natural Resources Conservation Service 2011).

The NSSC was identified as a Federal Superfund Site and placed on the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s (USEPA) National Priority List for cleanup in 1994. Contaminated soils were excavated and removed at the Building T-25 site in 1997, the Former Gym site in the spring/summer of 2002, the Building 62 and 68 site during the fall of 2005, the Boiler Plant (Building 19) site in 1990, 1995, and 2000 and the Building 14 and former Building 13 site in 2007 (US Environmental Protection Agency 2011a). A ROD for No Further Action for the soil at the T-25 area, the Boiler Plant (Building 19) and at Buildings 13 and 14 was signed in fall of 2008. Soils excavated at the Buildings 62 & 68 site during the fall of 2005 were included in the Former Proposed Gymnasium ROD for no further action which was signed in the fall of 2007. Although there has been closure for many soil contaminated sites at the NSSC, there remains the possibility that new sites could be identified within the 20-year Master Plan planning window. However, the Master Plan is reviewed on an as-needed basis but at a minimum of every 5 years to address necessary design changes which would include provision to address construction activities that may be located within or adjacent to newly discovered areas of soil contamination.

Figure 14 – Quartermaster Research and Development Center Historic District



Other potential environmental compliance requirements for Master Plan phasing projects are listed in Section **5.0 Long Range Component (Master Plan Phasing Projects)**. At a minimum, sediment erosion control techniques should be implemented to prevent runoff into adjacent wetlands and water bodies during construction activities. In addition, to minimize the potential for cross boundary annoyances, proper dust suppression techniques and applicable provisions to minimize noise should be employed during construction activities. Construction activities will be temporary and intermittent and with the use of proper provision to minimize runoff, dust and noise, Master Plan projects will have no long-term impacts to the physical environment.

4.2 Water Resources

The NSSC was added to the USEPA National Priority List in 1994. Groundwater contamination from the T-25 area, the Buildings 63, 2, and 45 Area and the Building 22 Site plume is currently being treated at the T-25 Treatment Area. Groundwater cleanup action at the NRRC installation is estimated to continue into the 2030's.

The NSSC was required by the 2001 ROD to prohibit all on-post use of groundwater that would cause ingestion and/or dermal exposure to contaminate groundwater. This was implemented in part by contracting for potable water from the town of Natick and also by prohibiting any new project on post that involves the use of groundwater at the NSSC. However, Master Plan construction activities should be reviewed prior to implementation to avoid impacting monitoring wells or appurtenant structures related to groundwater remediation and other environmental compliance requirements as listed in Section **5.2 Environmental Compliance Overview for Phasing Projects**. In addition, at a minimum, sediment erosion control techniques should be implemented to prevent runoff into neighboring wetlands and water bodies during construction activities. No impacts to water resources are anticipated as a result of Master Plan projects.

4.3 Biological Resources

No negative long-term impacts to biological resources will occur as a result of Master Plan projects. The majority of the NSSC installation has been developed and, Master Plan design plan projects will be built within the existing footprint of developed areas. Habitat resources within the installation, such as the forested area along Lake Cochituate, are within close proximity to the research campus that results in a high level of human disturbance. This limits the suitability of that forested area at the NSSC to those common species tolerant to human interaction. During construction activities, birds and small mammals may be temporarily displaced; however, the use of sediment erosion control techniques, the quick restoration of disturbed areas and the use of non-invasive plants in landscape design will minimize these temporary impacts to biological resources. Once construction activities are completed, wildlife common to the area will reutilize suitable habitat on the NSSC campus.

4.4 Endangered and Threatened Species

This project was reviewed for the presence of federally-listed or proposed, threatened or endangered species or critical habitat per instructions provided on the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's New England Field Office website: <http://www.fws.gov/newengland/EndangeredSpec-Consultation.htm>. Based on the information currently available, no federally-listed or proposed, threatened or endangered species or critical habitat under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service are known to occur in the project area.

The Massachusetts Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program (NHESP), in a letter dated 6 July 2011, indicated the Eastern Pondmussle (*Ligumia nasuta*), a species of “Special Concern” in Massachusetts has been found in the vicinity of the NSSC. This designation of habitat is viable until approximately January 2016. This species is vulnerable to changes in water quality, alterations in flow, habitat encroachment and habitat degradation through the removal of lakeside vegetation and the establishment of invasive species.

The protection of state listed species is recognized as an important component of the implementation of the NSSC Master Plan process. Maintaining lakeside vegetation was recognized in the Master Plan process through the inclusion of a wetland/open water 50’ setback for construction activities and use of native species in the landscaping plan. Some areas at the NSSC already have development within this setback area. In that case, redevelopment will occur within the existing footprint and there may be opportunities for restoration in these areas as more detailed information about Master Plan projects becomes available. In addition, proper sediment erosion control techniques will be implemented during construction activities to avoid runoff into adjacent wetland and waterbodies.

It is anticipated that Master Plan projects will not impact the Eastern Pondmussel due to these environmental protection measures. Coordination shall be undertaken, on the basis of comity, with the Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program for Master Plan projects that are located with Priority Habitats (see Figure 13 – Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program Priority Habitats) to assure that adequate protection measures are being implemented for state protected species prior to construction.

4.5 Socio-Economic Resources

The implementation of the Master Plan is expected to have positive socio-economic benefits for the NSSC workforce. The Master Plan incorporates the desires of the existing workforce for flexible work space, state-of-the-art technology and equipment, adequate storage space, updated infrastructure, a campus-like setting and community feel. These desires are reflected in the overall Master Plan vision for the NSSC to be a **sustainable research and development community** that fosters mission excellence through **state-of-the-art buildings** organized into a **walkable campus**.

With regard to regional scale socio-economic effects of the Master Plan; on-going collaboration between the NSSC and regional businesses and organizations should provide positive effects. The U.S. Army Natick Soldier Systems Center Science and Technology Board (<http://stb.natick.army.mil/>) strives to preserve, promote and enhance the NSSC as one of the country's preeminent military, academic and industrial technology complexes. Some examples of the on-going productive relationships with the Board member organizations include Natick Soldier Research, Development, and Engineering Center (NSRDEC) association with UMass Lowell where Natick scientists serve as adjunct faculty/visiting scientists; and collaboration, contracts and agreements with the UMass System and Draper Laboratory (21 February 2008 Meeting Minutes of the Science and Technology Board). Enhanced mission capabilities derived through the Master Plan process would be expected to provide positive socio-economic benefits to the region through employment opportunities and the continued collaboration of the NSSC with regional businesses and organizations.

4.6 Historic and Archaeological Resources

The NSSC Master Plan Consolidated Area Development Plan (Master Plan ADP), Alternative Six, envisions specific activities and undertaking that will be implemented in five phases, including demolition, new construction, and infrastructure and site/landscape modifications. Several of the proposed individual undertakings that the NSSC facility has programmed under the Master Plan ADP during the five year planning period of the Integrated Cultural Resource Management Plan (PAL, Inc. and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New England District 2011) have the potential to have an effect on historic architectural properties. An evaluation of the effects of each undertaking on historic properties and their setting should be conducted, as specified in an executed Programmatic Agreement (Appendix F) between the Natick Soldier Systems Center facility and the MA SHPO. The Programmatic Agreement provides guidance on how to evaluate and if necessary minimize or mitigate any effects on the QRDC Historic District, for each of the undertakings involving demolition or alteration of historic buildings or structures, and any major changes to their site surroundings.

5.0 LONG RANGE COMPONENT (MASTER PLAN PHASING PROJECTS)

5.1 Phasing One Through Six - Demolition and Construction

The Long Range Component of the Master Plan includes a Phasing Plan for demolition and construction over the 20 year planning time span of the Master Plan. The Phasing Plan is addressed on a macro level considering that over time, projects may need to be modified to adjust to changing needs and requirements. Space planning and allocation for individual users will be addressed by Department of Public Works (DPW) and the Garrison closer to the construction process.

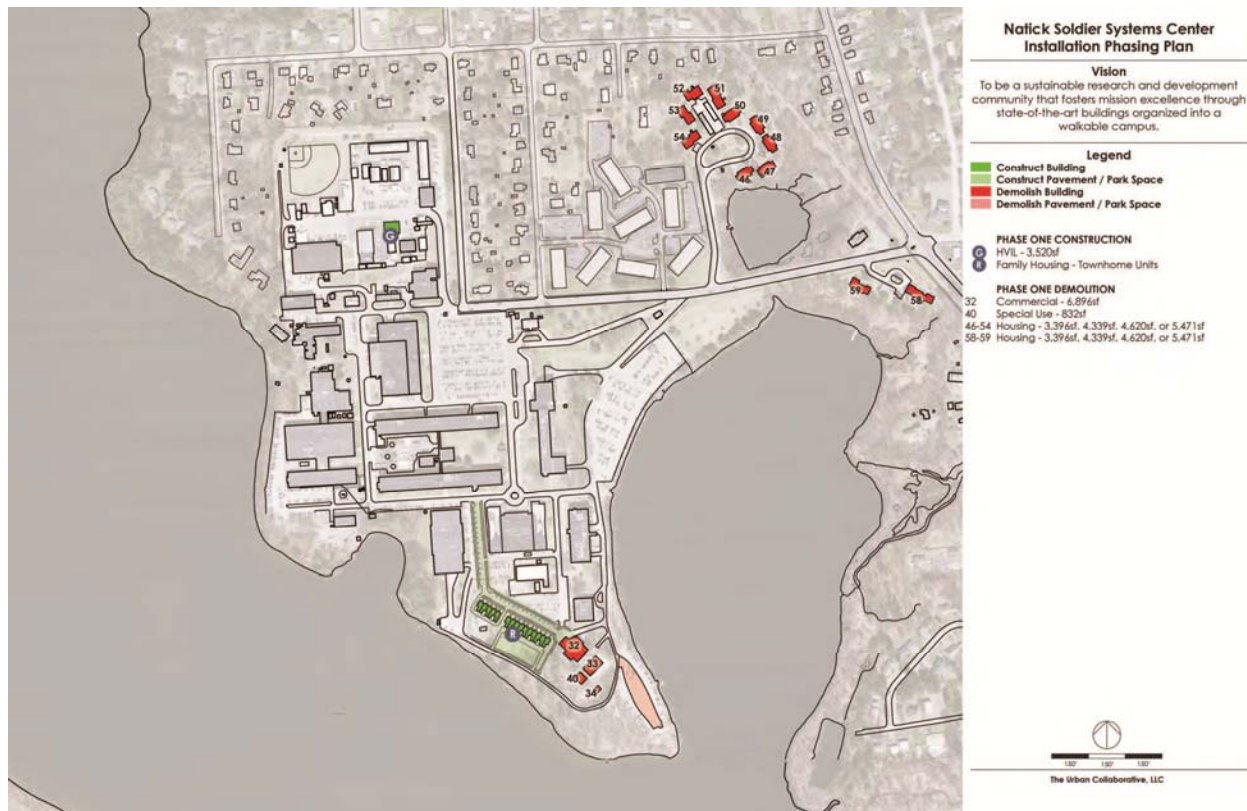
There are six phases of demolition and construction anticipated. The descriptive information that is available for each project is variable based upon the priority level, the current level of planning and security classification of the project. This section provides a general

description of each project. An overview of the environmental compliance requirements for the Long Range Component is provided in Section 5.2 **Environmental Compliance Overview for Phasing Projects** and the environmental impacts of the phasing plan is provided in Section 5.3 **Environmental Impacts of the Long Rang Component**

5.1.1 Phase One Demolition and Construction Activities

See Figure 15 to view Phase One Master Plan Demolition and Construction.

Figure 15 – Master Plan Demolition and Construction – Phase One



Source: 31 August 2011 Natick Soldier Systems Center, Long Range Component prepared by The Urban Collaborative, LLC

5.1.1.1 Demolition – There are plans to demolish 15 structures and one area of pavement in the Master Plan Demolition and Construction during Phase One as follows; Housing Buildings 46 through 54, 58 and 59, Building 32 – Community Center, Building 40 – Bath House, Building 33 – Pool and Building 34 – former wading pool. A parking (and storage area) will also be demolished in the southeast end of the peninsula.

5.1.1.2 Construction – A lab (Building G), housing complex (Building R) and park space in the vicinity of the housing area are proposed for construction in Phase 1 as follows:

High Velocity Impact Lab (HVIL)(Building G) – This project involves the construction of a

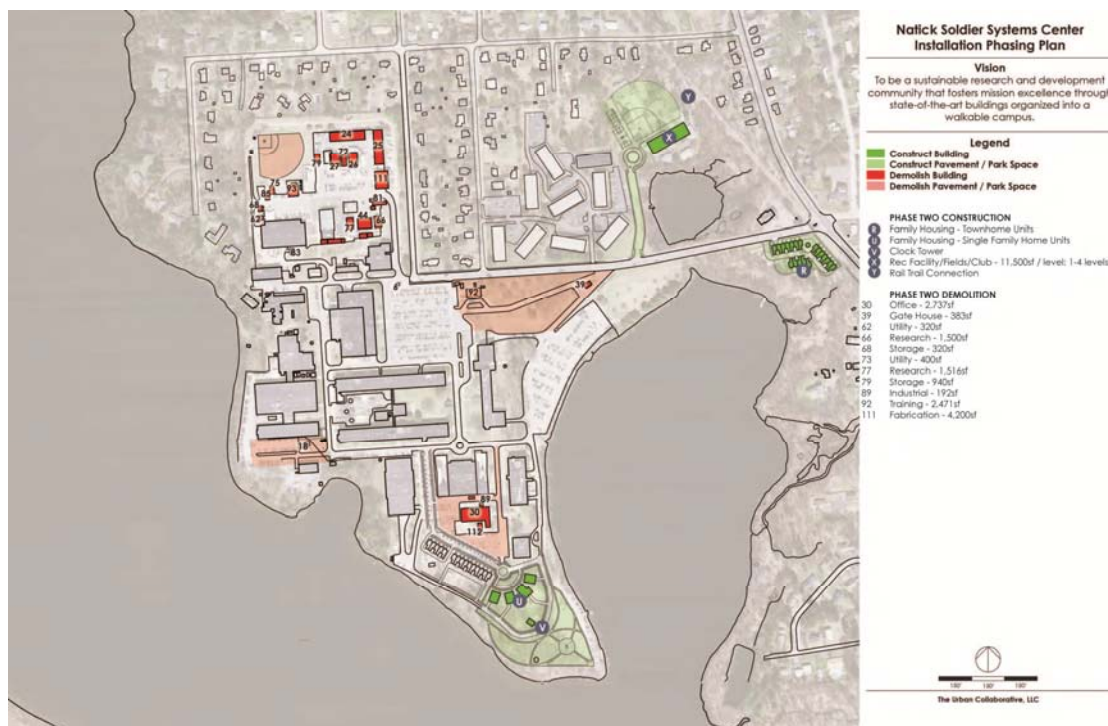
new High Velocity Impact Laboratory (HVIL) to perform on-site ballistics tests on military defense materials rather than conducting tests at other Army facilities. On-site testing will provide more efficient time-frames for obtaining test results and the development of better protective equipment for soldiers that wear and depend on products developed at the NSSC. The site for the proposed HVIL is in the installation's North Campus, formerly a borrow area (referred to as "The Pit") which has been gradually developed with various buildings and a recreation area.

Family Housing – Townhouse Units (Building R) – This is the Phase 1 portion of the family housing which will provide 60 townhouse units on NSSC. The barracks will be a maximum of 20' wide with natural light entering through the front and back elevations. Sharing walls will increase energy efficiency and thermal comfort for the residents. However, to comply with anti-terrorism force protection regulations, there will be no more that 12 units with uninterrupted shared walls. They will be a minimum of 2-stories and a maximum of 4-stories. The primary entries to the units will be positioned along primary streets or facing neighborhood parks with sidewalks to encourage a walkable environment.

5.1.2 Phase Two Demolition and Construction Activities

See Figure 16 for the location of Phase Two Demolition and Construction Activities.

Figure 16 – Master Plan Demolition and Construction – Phase Two



Source: 31 August 2011 Natick Soldier Systems Center, Long Range Component prepared by The Urban Collaborative, LLC

5.1.2.1 Demolition – There are plans to demolish 22 structures in Phase Two as follows; Buildings 24, 27, 26, 68, 72 - storage, 75- Connex storage on gravel bed (no structure), Building 25 - storage (hazardous water storage), Building 79 - storage (salt shed), Building 111 - Fabrication, Building 81 – Research (Drop Test Tower and two small associated buildings), Building 44 - Administrative, Building 77 - Research (Combustion Test Facility), Building 66 - Research (Roller Test Facility), Building 62 - Utility, Building 93 - Storage (Hazardous Waste Acclimation), Building 85- Shed, Building 92 – Training, 89 – Industrial (Low Radiation Storage), Building 112 - Lab, Building 39 – Gate House, two small parking areas in the North Campus Industrial Area, three parking areas and the ball park in the South Campus Research Area.

5.1.2.2 Construction – Phase 2 involves five construction projects as follows: Family Housing (Buildings R and U), Clock Tower (Building V), Recreation Facility/Club (Complex X) and the Rail Trail Connection and the construction of parkland in the vicinity of Family Housing U.

Family Housing (Building R) – This is the Phase 2 portion of the family housing construction as described in Section 5.1.1.2.

Family Housing (Building U) – This building is a notional administration or research facility that will accommodate future missions. It will be a maximum of 50' wide to provide natural ventilation and day lighting to building occupants. The building will have a minimum of 3-stories and a maximum of 4-stories. The primary entries to the facilities will be positions along primary streets with sidewalks or pedestrian quads to encourage a walkable environment

Clock Tower (Building V) – The Clock Tower will become a focal point on the installation. It will also serve as a security overlook for the NSSC.

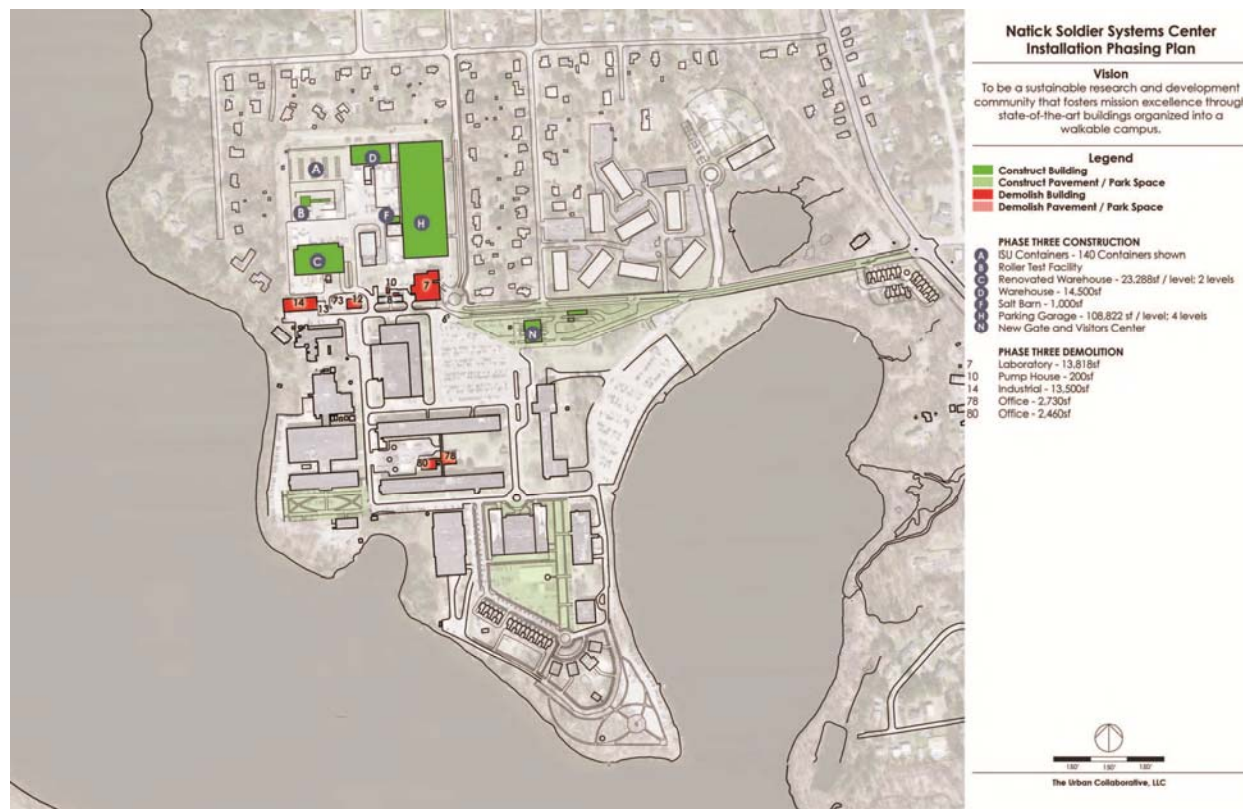
Recreation Facility/Field/Club (Complex X) - This project is be located in a previously disturbed area (former housing). It will provide a facility for recreation, a club for installation community activities, as well as a baseball field, basketball court and tennis court. The recreation area will be jointing used by installation personnel and by local community members.

Rail Trail Connection (Y) – This is a local effort to develop a bike and pedestrian trail along the abandoned rail line. It is an opportunity for the NSSC to contribute to the greater community of the city of Natick.

5.1.3 Phase Three Demolition and Construction Activities

See Figure 17 for the location of Phase Three Demolition and Construction Activities.

Figure 17 – Master Plan Demolition and Construction – Phase Three



Source: 31 August 2011 Natick Soldier Systems Center, Long Range Component prepared by The Urban Collaborative, LLC

5.1.3.1 Demolition – Phase Three involves the demolition of seven buildings; Building 7 – Laboratory, Building 10 – Pump House, Building 14 – Industrial, Building 73 – Utility (Flammable Material Storage) and two Offices Buildings (Buildings 78 and 80).

5.1.3.2 Construction – Phase Three construction involves the construction of six buildings, an ISU container area and three areas of parklands as described in the following section.

International Salvage Union (ISU) Containers (Building A) – There are currently many ISU container in the North Industrial Campus ADP. The space will be used to consolidate the current contain storage needs in an organized and easily accessible layout.

Roller Test Facility (Building B) - The roller test facility is an operation requirement of the NSSC consisting of both built space and hardstand requirements.

Renovated Warehouse (Building C) - This project involves the construction of a central facility, combining all the storage requirements of each organization, along with general installation storage. The project should replace several buildings in the North Industrial Campus Area that are in disrepair.

Warehouse (Building D) – This warehouse space will serve the purpose of consolidating numerous smaller storage sheds currently scattered in the industrial are of the NSSC.

Salt Barn (Building F) – The salt barn will serve as storage and will be located in the North Industrial Campus with easy access within and outside of the installation.

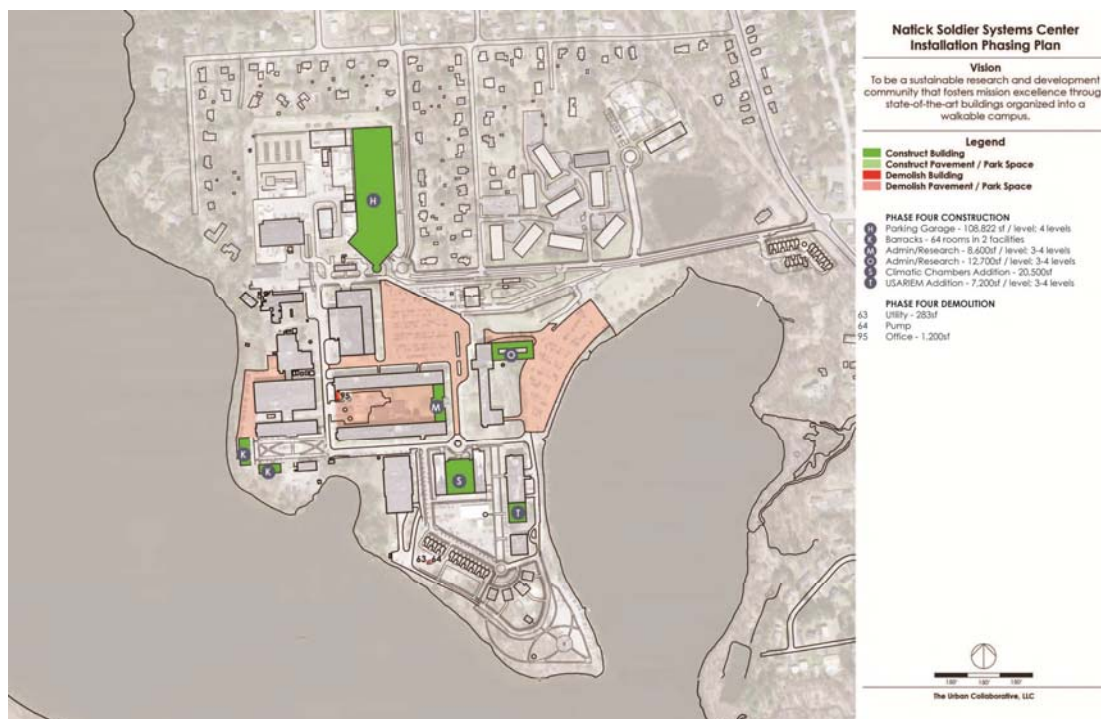
New Gate Visitor Center Building N) - This project relocates the installation’s main security gate further west to provide a more secure access to the installation. This project would include dedicated permanent facilities for vehicular inspection and associated pass/id issuance. The main roadway would extend Forth Avenue between the exiting parking lot east of Building 5 and Building 92.

Parking Garage (Building H) – This is phase one of the parking garage construction. The parking garage will consolidate the many surface parking lots currently meeting the NSSC’s parking requirements. The parking garage will provide 1,450 spaces.

5.1.4 Phase Four Demolition and Construction Activities

See Figure 18 for the location of Phase Four Demolition and Construction Activities.

Figure 18 – Master Plan Demolition and Construction – Phase Four



Source: 31August 2011 Natick Soldier Systems Center, Long Range Component prepared by The Urban Collaborative, LLC

5.1.4.1 Demolition – Phase Four involves the demolition of one office building

(Building 95) and the demolition of three large parking lots (the large area to the east is a grassy area). The area located adjacent to Pegan Cove is an existing open grassy area which will remain to be utilized in the future as a training area.

5.1.4.2 Construction - Phase Four construction involves the construction of seven buildings. Four of the construction projects, Building O, T, S and M, involve buildings listed as part of the Quartermaster Research and Development Historic District.

Parking Garage (Building H) – This is phase two of the parking garage construction as described in Section 5.1.3.2.

Barracks (Building K) – The barracks housing will provide 64 rooms in two separate facilities on the NSSC. The building will be a maximum of 50' wide to facilitate opportunities for natural ventilation and day lighting. The will be a minimum of 3-stories and maximum of 4-stories. The primary entries to the barracks will be positioned along pedestrian quads to encourage a walkable environment of the Soldiers occupying them.

Administration/Research (Building M) - The Administrative/Research Building will provide physical connections to other, adjacent facilities (Building 3 and 4) to facilitate movements between laboratories and offices.

Administration/Research (Building O) - The Administrative/Research Facility is an addition to Building 1 which is designated as part of the Quartermaster Research and Development Center Historic District.

Climatic Chambers (Building S) - The Doriot Climatic Chamber is a state-of-the-art research facility located in Building 2. It has approximately 38,000 square feet which contains a unique group of climatic chambers used to test equipment, uniforms and personnel in a variety of extreme controlled climatic conditions. The complex consists of two wind tunnels which can generate winds of up to 40 miles per hour (mph), the Tropical Chamber and the Arctic Chamber with temperature ranges of 0°Fahrenheit (F) to 165°F and -70° to 120°F, respectively. Other climatic variable in the chambers include rainfall up to 4 inches per hour and relative humidity for 10% to 90%. The chambers are large enough to accommodate testing of 25 human volunteers, parachutes, test shelters, or other Army equipment.

The Doriot Climatic Chambers were constructed in 1954 with upgrades to the facility occurring in 1993 and more recently in 2000. At the present time, some operating systems can no longer be modified or supported due to outdated technologies and must be replaced. Continued maintenance of these facilities is required to ensure their continued viability. This project will expand research and development capabilities and upgrade the facility technologically to meet the current mission needs of the installation.

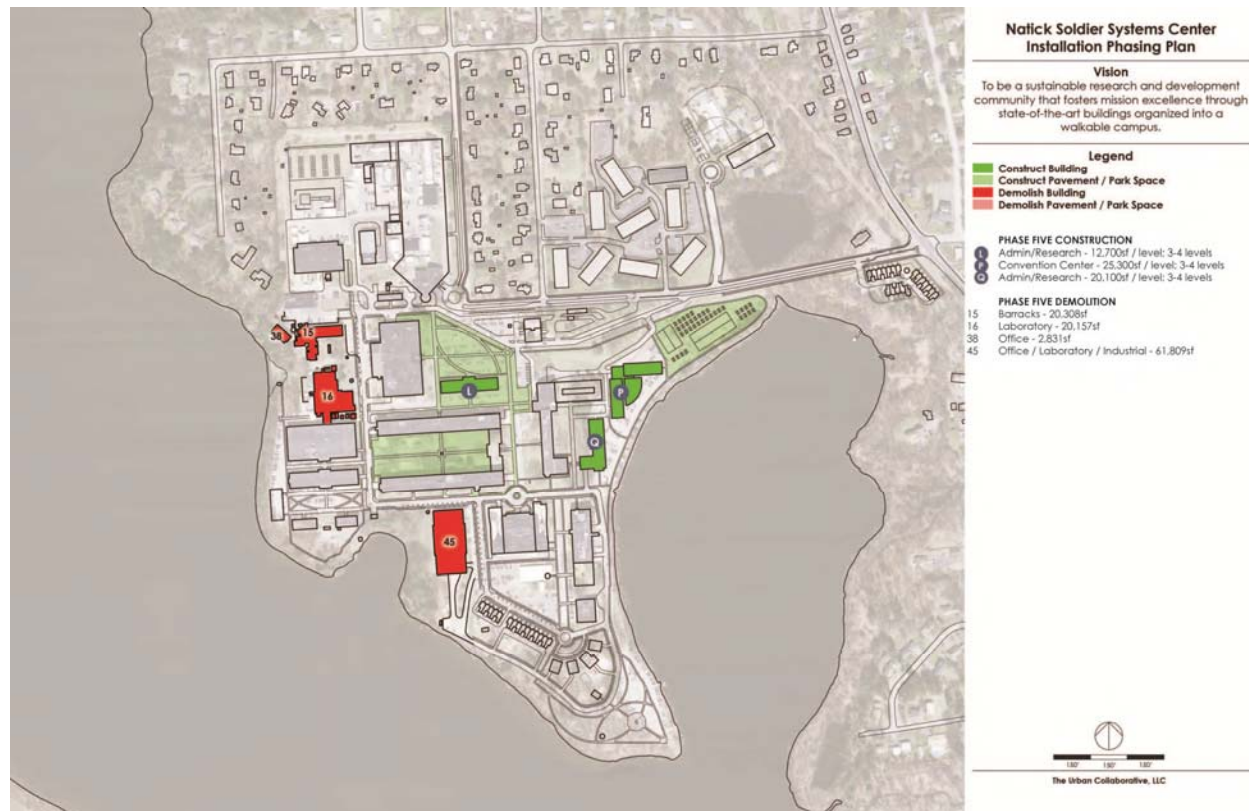
USARIEM Addition (Building T) - The U.S. Army Research Institute of Environmental Medicine (USARIEM) is a subordinate laboratory of the U.S. Army Medical Research and

Materiel Command.

5.1.5 Phase Five Demolition and Construction Activities

See Figure 19 for the location of Phase Five Demolition and Construction Activities.

Figure 19 – Master Plan Demolition and Construction – Phase Five



Source: 31 August 2011 Natick Soldier Systems Center, Long Range Component prepared by The Urban Collaborative, LLC

5.1.5.1 Demolition – Four building will be demolished in Phase 5; Building 15 – Barracks, Building 16 – Laboratory, Building 38 – Office and Building 45 - Office.

5.1.5.2 Construction –Phase Five construction involves the construction of two Administrative/Research buildings (Building L and Q) and a Convention Center (Building P). Tents are depicted in the grassy area along the northern end of Pegan Cove; there are no permanent facilities proposed but this area could be used for training purposes. Two open space area will also be constructed in the South Campus Research Area.

Administration/Research (Building L) – This building is a notional administration or research facility that will accommodate future missions. It will be a maximum of 50' wide to provide natural ventilation and day lighting to building occupants. The building will have a minimum of 3-stories and a maximum of 4-stories. The primary entries to the facilities will be positions

along primary streets with sidewalks or pedestrian quads to encourage a walkable environment.

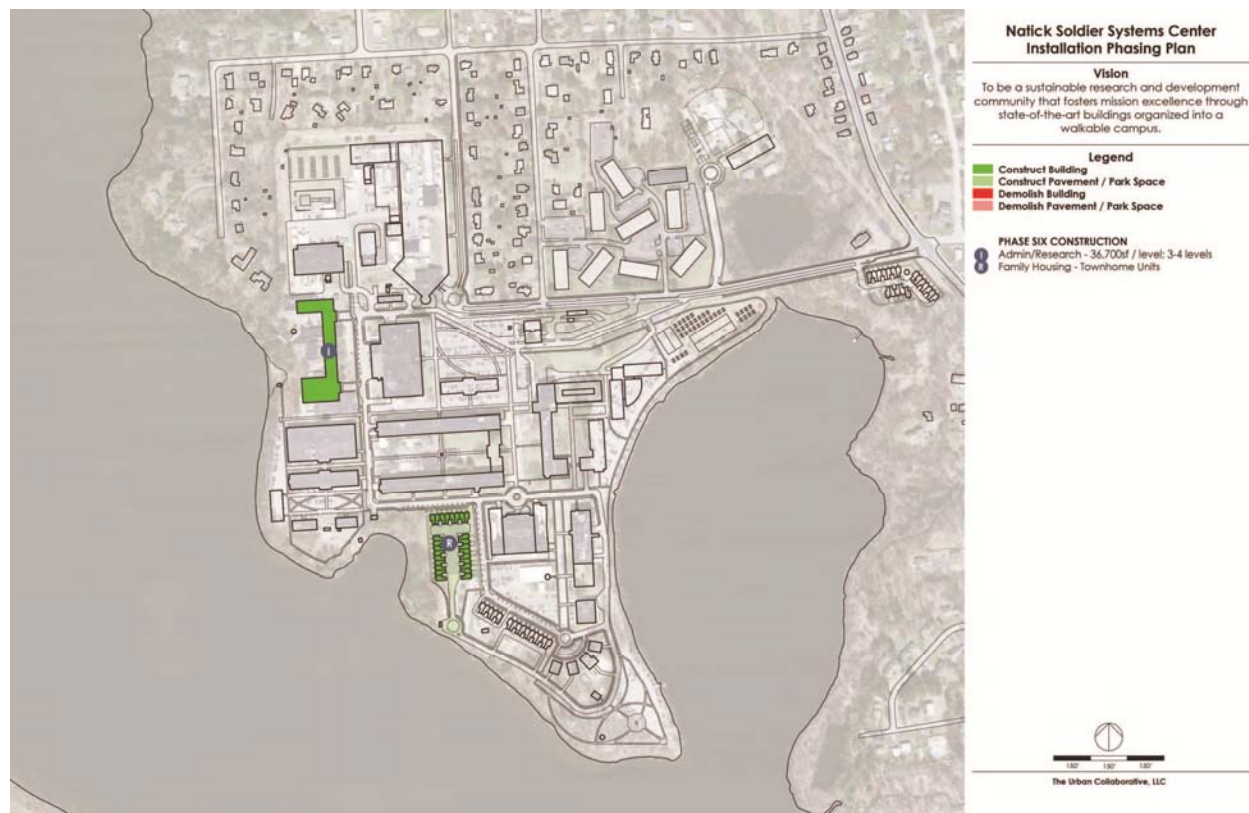
Convention Center (Building P) – Similar to Building L

Administration/Research (Building Q) Similar to Building L

5.1.6 **Phase Six Demolition and Construction Activities**

See Figure 20 for the location of Phase Six Demolition and Construction Activities.

Figure 20 – Master Plan Demolition and Construction – Phase Six



Source: 31 August 2011 Natick Soldier Systems Center, Long Range Component prepared by The Urban Collaborative, LLC

5.1.6.1 Demolition – No buildings or parking areas are demolished during Phase 6.

5.1.6.2 Construction –Phase Six construction involves the construction of one Administrative/Research buildings (Building I) and a Family Housing Area (Building R).

Administration/Research (Building I) – Similar to Building L

Family Housing - Townhouses (Building R) – This is Phase 6 of the family housing

construction which will provide 60 townhouse units on NSSC. The barracks will be a maximum of 20' wide with natural light entering through the front and back elevations. Sharing walls will increase energy efficiency and thermal comfort for the residents. However, to comply with anti-terrorism force protection regulations, there will be no more than 12 units with uninterrupted shared walls. They will be a minimum of 2-stories and a maximum of 4-stories. The primary entries to the units will be positioned along primary streets or facing neighborhood parks with sidewalks to encourage a walkable environment.

5.2 Environmental Compliance Overview for Phasing Projects

The following sections provide an overview of potential environmental compliance requirements for individual projects within the six phases of demolition and construction utilizing existing information. There is not enough specific project information to determine the compliance requirements of each individual Master Plan project at this time. Individual projects will need to be reviewed and environmental compliance requirement completed prior to implementation. This is a general overview of the current potential environmental compliance requirements. However, this overview should not be considered inclusive of all potential environmental compliance requirements necessary for all Master Plan projects over the current 20 year evaluation period.

5.2.1 National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) – Projects that meet the definition of a Categorical Exclusion (CX), pursuant to 32 CFR 651 Environmental Analysis of Army Actions, do not require the preparation of a NEPA document. It should be noted however, that projects meeting CX definitions or thresholds must still comply with other applicable laws and regulations such as the National Historic Preservation Act, Endangered Species Act, etc. In addition, a Record of Environmental Consideration (REC) needs to be completed for CX projects prior to project implementation, if applicable. A REC is a signed statement that briefly documents that an Army action has received environmental review. REC's are prepared for CX's that require them or for projects covered under existing or previous NEPA documentation.

For projects that do not qualify for a CX, the preparation of an Environmental Assessment (EA) or Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is required. These documents are intended to facilitate agency planning and informed decision-making. An EA helps project proponents and other decision makers understand the potential extent of environmental impact of a proposed action and its alternatives and whether those impacts (or cumulative effects) are significant (32 CFR 651.32). If the EA process results in a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI), a FONSI is signed and the project may proceed. If the project evaluation results in a determination of significant impacts, then an EIS must be prepared. Some projects with known significant environmental impacts or projects of substantial scope may prepare an EIS from the start (and forego the preparation of an EA). It should also be noted that compliance with the regulations for the Department of Army Information Security Program (AR-380-5) and a NEPA analyses will be necessary for proposed actions involving classified information. Although classification does not relieve a proponent of the requirement to assess and document the environmental effects of a proposed action, classified portions will be kept separate and provided

to reviewers in accordance with Army Information Security Program regulations.

5.2.2 Construction General Permit (CGP) - Some Master Plan projects may require an US Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) Construction General Permit (CGP) prior to commencement of project activities. The USEPA CGP regulates the discharge of stormwater from construction sites (which include soil disturbing activities such as clearing, grading, excavating, stockpiling, etc.) that disturb one or more acres of land, and from smaller sites that are part of a larger, common plan of development. In Massachusetts, Operators of regulated construction sites are required to develop a stormwater pollution prevention plan; to implement sediment, erosion, and pollution prevention control measures; and to obtain a GCP from the USEPA (USEPA is the responsible authority in the State of Massachusetts for issuing the CGP (Permit Number MAR120000) (US Environmental Protection Agency 2012). Aside from the GCP permit conditions, the permit for the State of Massachusetts has additional permit conditions as outlined in Appendix D - Part 10: Permit Conditions Applicable to Specific States, Indian Country, or Territories. To comply with these additional permit conditions, some projects may require the Operator to comply with the State Water Quality Statutes, Regulations and Policies, State Stormwater Management regulations and other State Environmental Laws, Regulations and Policies (e.g., Massachusetts Wetland Protection Act, the Massachusetts Clean Water Act, the Massachusetts Endangered Species Act, etc.). On February 16, 2012, EPA issued the final 2012 CGP. The 2012 CGP replaces the 2008 CGP (which expired on February 15, 2012), and will provide coverage for eligible new and existing construction projects for a period of five years.

5.2.3 Section 404 of the Clean Water Act - Section 404 of the Clean Water Act program establishes regulates the discharge of dredged or fill material into waters of the United States, including wetlands. The USEPA and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers have promulgated a number of regulations to implement the permitting program which required that wetland impacts be avoided to the maximum extent practicable. Permitting requirements are established in the Massachusetts Programmatic General Permit (MA PGP), issued by the Army Corps of Engineers, New England District Regulatory Division. The effective date of the MA PGP is January 21, 2010 to January 21, 2015.

5.2.4 Compliance with Remedial Action Land Use Controls (LUCs) – Land Use Controls (LUCs) are established during the Superfund remedial action design and agreement process to protect the integrity and effectiveness of a selected remedial action remedy. LUCs are remedy-specific and site-specific but generally limit activities in specified areas that would interfere with the operation of the remedy. There are no current LUCs in the 2001 Record of Decision (ROD) for construction activities conducted over groundwater contamination plumes at the NSSC. However, draft guidance was developed in 2002 by the U.S Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for Evaluating the Vapor Intrusion to Indoor Air Pathway from Groundwater and Soil. Should a risk assessment indicate that subsurface vapor intrusion might pose an unacceptable risk to future inhabitants of a proposed residential structure or to workers in a proposed industrial structure planned for immediately above or within 100 feet down gradient of a plume of contaminated groundwater, the Army will evaluate and will discuss with

the EPA the design of the structure to incorporate vapor barriers, to eliminate the potential risk. Other considerations during construction activities would be to maintain the integrity of the monitoring wells and appurtenant structures associated with groundwater remediation activities. LUCs may also be required for future activities not anticipated at the current time.

5.2.5 Compliance with State and Local Regulations - Portions of the NSSC are designated as Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program (NHESP) Priority Habitat 200 (PH200) and Estimated Habitat 95 (EH 95) for Eastern Pondmussle (*Ligumia nasuta*). The Massachusetts Endangered Species Act (MESA) establishes a comprehensive approach to the protection of Endangered, Threatened, and Special Concern species and their habitats in Massachusetts. MESA regulations (321 CMR 10.00) include environmental review provisions for projects located within designated habitat areas in order to avoid a “take” of a State-listed Species. For projects of smaller scope, such as work within the existing footprints, 321 CMR 10.00 provides exemptions from the established review procedures as specified in Section 10.14: Exemptions from Review for Projects or Activities in Priority Habitat. Work outside of the scope of an established exemption will involve project review by the Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program (NHESP). The protection of state listed species is recognized as an important component of the implementation of the NSSC Master Plan and as such, as a matter of comity, for projects located with Priority and Estimated Habitat, the NSSC coordinates with the NHESP to confirm exemptions or determine best management practices for the protection of the Eastern Pondmussle. Prior to initiating Phasing, project located within Priority Habitats should be located (see Figure 13 – Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program Priority Habitats) to determine coordination requirements.

The Massachusetts Wetland Protection Act (WPA) gives town Conservation Commissions the discretionary authority to determine if resource areas within its jurisdiction (100 foot wetland buffer zone) are being protected, to regulate work in these areas, and to enforce the wetlands regulations. The protection of wetland resources is an important component of the NSSC Master Plan and as such, as a matter of comity, the NSSC coordinates with the local Conservation Commission for construction activities within 100 feet of a vegetated wetland. In addition, the Town of Natick has local bylaw regulations which includes a No Disturbance Zone; which are lands within 25 feet of wetlands, and an additional No Build Zone which are lands within 15 feet of any No Disturbance Zone. Prior to initiating Phasing, projects located within the 100 foot jurisdictional boundary (see Figure 12 – Wetland Delineation and Setbacks) to determine coordination requirements.

5.3 Environmental Impacts of the Long Range Component

This section provides a general review of the Long Range Component projects conducted in Phase One through Five. These projects should be reviewed for environmental compliance

once more specific and timely information is available for individual projects. Environmental compliance may be able to be conducted by Phase if enough information is available for each project within a Phase.

During the Notice of Availability public notice process, the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (MA DCR) and the Cochituate State Park Advisory Committee (CSPAC) indicated that they were similarly concerned about sustaining the long-term conservation and public recreation attributes of the Cochituate State Park. To address these concerns, the NSSC attended several CSPAC meetings between September and November of 2012 which resulted in some building color, lighting and vegetation buffer considerations being incorporated into the Master Plan Design Guidelines. For additional information, see Section 8. Coordination and the MA DCR/ CSPAC letter to the NSSC dated November 19, 2012 in Appendix B – Correspondence Received.

5.3.1 Phase One Demolition and Construction Activities

5.3.2.1 Demolition - Projects that do not involve impacts to sensitive resource areas may be covered by a CX in 32 CFR 651 Appendix B - Section II (c) (2) (REC required). Buildings 33, 34, 40 and the parking (storage lot) demolition are located within NHESP Priority Habitat and as such, the NSSC shall coordinate with the NHESP, as a matter of comity, to determine protection measures. None of these demolition projects are identified as historic buildings.

5.3.2.2 Construction - Construction projects that do not involve impacts to sensitive resource areas may be covered by a CX in 32 CFR 651 Appendix B - Section II (c) (1) (REC required).

An Environmental Assessment (EA) will need to be prepared for the High Velocity Impact Lab (HVIL) (Building G) project due to its substantial size and scope. The EA will need to incorporate the recent expansion of the project to include a second firing range, incorporate the results of a noise study to determine ambient conditions and noise impacts to an adjacent residential neighborhood (the building is designed to contain the noise generated from a 50 caliber firing test.) There was also an Industrial hygienist study to determine amount of air flow to remove gun powder from the building interior to meet appropriate standards. The design should also include explosive material storage (up to 3 pounds) in compliance with Army Regulations within the building interior.

5.3.2 Phase Two Demolition and Construction Activities

5.3.2.1 Demolition - An environmental evaluation should be conducted prior to the demolition of Building 25, 89, and 93 which are used for Low Radiation or Hazardous Waste Storage. Many of these demolition projects may be covered by a CX in 32 CFR 651 Appendix B - Section II (c) (2) however, due to the variability of the buildings in the Phase 2, these projects should be evaluated to determine the environmental compliance requirements. The

demolition of three parking areas and the ball field in Phase Two will probably require a GCP from the USEPA as this work will impact an acre or more of area. None of these demolition projects are identified as historic buildings.

5.3.2.2 Construction – Construction projects that do not involve impacts to sensitive resource areas may be covered by a CX in 32 CFR 651 Appendix B - Section II (c) (1). The Phase 2 construction of the Family Housing (Building R), the Recreation Facility/Field/Club (Complex X) and the Rail Trail Connection (Y), located in the Eastside Recreation and Housing area, are located in a previously disturbed area (former housing area and railroad bed). However, prior to project construction, compliance with Section 404 of the Clean Water Act should be evaluated due to its adjacency to wetland areas. Projects in this area are also within the jurisdiction of the MA Wetland Protection Act (within 100 feet of a wetland) and local Conservation Commission.

The Family Housing (Building U) and Clock Tower (Building V) are located in a previously disturbed area (community center, bath house and pool area). However, this area is located with a Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program (NHESP) Priority Habitat. Some of the work within the parklands within 100 feet of Lake Cochituate is within the jurisdiction of the MA Wetland Protection Act and local Conservation Commission. The need for a General Construction Permit (CGP) should also be determined because the cumulative impacts from the construction of two family housing areas and parklands will be an acre or more of disturbance.

5.3.3 Phase Three Demolition and Construction Activities

5.3.3.1 Demolition - Building 7 is listed as a historic building within the Quartermaster Research and Development Historic District. If no extraordinary circumstances are identified, these projects may be covered by CX in 32 CFR 651 Appendix B - Section II (c) (2) (REC required).

5.3.3.2 Construction - If no extraordinary circumstances are identified, these projects may be covered by CX in 32 CFR 651 Appendix B - Section II (c) (1) (REC required). The construction projects in Phase 3 are not located within close proximity to wetland resources with the exception of the main access road (Kansas Street) located between Lake Cochituate and Little Roundy Pond which is within the jurisdiction of the NHESP and the local Conservation Commission. The need for a CGP from the USEPA will need to be evaluated when construction details are available for parkland construction.

5.3.4 Phase Four Demolition and Construction Activities

5.3.4.1 Demolition - If no extraordinary circumstances are identified, these projects may be covered by CX in 32 CFR 651 Appendix B - Section II (c) (2) (REC required). No historic building will be impacted by No Phase 4 demolition projects. A portion of the

parking lot along the west side of the NSSC is located within Priority Habitats which will involve coordination with the NHESP. As well, the open land adjacent to Pegan Cove is located within 100 feet of a wetland which will involve coordination with the local Conservation Commission. In addition, the demolition of parking areas will result in a disturbance to more than an acre and as such, will require a CGP from the USEPA prior to demolition activities.

5.3.4.2 Construction - If no extraordinary circumstances are identified, these projects may be covered by CX in 32 CFR 651 Appendix B - Section II (c) (2) (REC Required). One of the barracks (Building K) is located within Priority Habitat and as such, coordination with the NHESP should be undertaken prior to construction.

The Doriot Climatic Chambers (Building S) upgrade project was reviewed in accordance with 32 CFR 651.29 screening criteria and was determined to qualify for Categorical Exclusion (c) (2) 32 CFR 651: construction and demolition. However, Record of Environmental Consideration (REC) is required prior to commencement of construction activities. This building is also designated as part of the Quartermaster Research and Development Center Historic District. In addition, the U.S. Army Research Institute of Environmental Medicine (USARIEM) (Building T) involves the construction activities that may impact Building 42, the Administration/Research (Building M) project which will provide physical connections to other, adjacent facilities (Buildings 3 and 4), and the Administration/Research (Building O) will attach to Building 1. Buildings 1, 3, 4, and 42 are part of the Quartermaster Research and Development Historic District and will be affected by Phase 4 construction projects. These projects should be reviewed in accordance with the NSSC and MA SHPO Programmatic Agreement (Appendix F).

5.3.5 Phase Five Demolition and Construction Activities

5.3.5.1 Demolition - If no extraordinary circumstances are identified, these projects may be covered by CX in 32 CFR 651 Appendix B - Section II (c) (2) (REC required). Building 38 is located within the jurisdiction of the local Conservation Commission. In addition, Buildings 15 and 16 are listed as part of the Quarter Master Research and Development Historic District. It is anticipated that this activity will be covered by the upcoming Programmatic Agreement.

5.3.5.2 Construction - If no extraordinary circumstances are identified, these projects may be covered by CX in 32 CFR 651 Appendix B - Section II (c) (2) (REC Required). Administrative/Research buildings (Building Q), the Convention Center (Building P) and open space training area (located adjacent to Pegan Cove) are located within the jurisdiction of the local Conservation Commission. The open space training area is also located within Priority Habitats.

5.3.6 Phase Six Demolition and Construction Activities

5.3.6.1 Demolition – No buildings or parking areas are demolished during Phase 6.

5.3.6.2 Construction - If no extraordinary circumstances are identified, these projects may be covered by CX in 32 CFR 651 Appendix B - Section II (c) (2) (REC Required). Phase 6 construction projects are located in previously disturbed areas and therefore, no impact to sensitive resources is anticipated.

6.0 OTHER COMPLIANCE REQUIREMENTS

6.1 Environmental Justice

Executive Order 12898 directs Federal agencies to identify and address disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects of an agency's programs, policies, and activities on minority populations and low-income populations. The proposed project is not expected to pose impacts upon any minority or low-income neighborhoods adjacent to or in the vicinity of the project pursuant to Executive Order No. 12898. The proposed Master Plan projects will be located on the existing U.S. Army property in Natick, Massachusetts. Therefore, no disproportionately high and adverse impacts specific to any minority or low-income neighborhood would occur as a result of the proposed project.

6.2 Protection of Children

Executive Order 13045 requires Federal agencies to examine proposed actions to determine whether they will have disproportionately high human health or safety risks on children. During the construction phase of the proposed project, heavy construction equipment and vehicles will be transported to the site. However, the construction area is located on U.S. Army property which limits access for the general public and would therefore prevent unauthorized personnel from entering the work area (including children). In addition, there will be a temporary increase in truck traffic transporting materials to and from the site. These trucks will be limited to public roadways and the existing project access road and increased traffic will be of short duration and temporary. Therefore, the proposed project is not expected to cause any disproportionate direct, or indirect or cumulative environmental health or safety risks to children.

6.3 Floodplain Management

Executive Order No. 11988 Floodplain Management requires Federal agencies to evaluate the potential effects of any actions which may take place within floodplains. The existing Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) Panel (dated 4 June 2010) does not include a determination of the floodplain for the NSSC area. The FIRM Panel (Number 536 of 656) categorizes the NSSC property as Zone D which is defined as "Areas in which flood hazards are undetermined, but possible" and Lake Cochituate is categorized as a Zone A which is defined as "No Base Flood Elevation determined". In the absence of such maps, the best available information may be used to determine the location of the floodplain according to Executive Order No. 11988.

Floodplain maps were prepared for the Town of Natick as part of a drainage study in

1979 (Coffin & Richardson 1979). The ponded storage calculations for this study used a water surface elevation of Lake Cochituate of 137.5 feet National Geodetic Vertical Datum of 1929 (NGVD29) which resulted in the calculation of the 100-year floodplain elevation to be 140.0 feet NGVD29. Due to the steep shoreline topography of the NSSC property, the 100-year floodplain is identified as a narrow area along the periphery of the NSSC main campus and narrow area around Little Roundy Pond (see Floodplain Maps – Appendix E).

The surface water elevation of Lake Cochituate is controlled by the Lake Cochituate Dam which is located at the northern end of the lake in Framingham. The dam was built in 1920 and is controlled by the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (MA DCR) for recreation purposes. Based upon a personnel communication with the dam operator (conversation with Tim Murphy, Cochituate State Park on May 4, 2011), the management of the dam has remained consistent over the last few decades. For comparison purposes, the MA DCR 2004 Lake Cochituate Dam Emergency Action Plan cites the surface elevation of Lake Cochituate to be 137.9 feet NGVD29 and the United State Geological Survey (USGS) Framingham Quadrangle dated 1987 (topographic map) cites an elevation for Lake Cochituate of 42.0 NGVD88 (which is equivalent to 137.8 NGVD29).

Although these elevations are slightly higher (a range of 2.5 to 3.3 inches) than the 1979 Coffin and Richardson study, this difference is not expected to alter the 100-floodplain to a large degree due to the steep topography of the NSSC area. Although the capacity of Lake Cochituate to absorb runoff cannot be assumed, the large size of Lake Cochituate (625 acres in size) would be likely attenuate increased runoff due to urbanization in the watershed to some degree. As such, the floodplain boundaries identified in the 1979 Coffin & Richardson study were adequate for use in defining floodplain impacts for the proposed Master Plan. There are no projects proposed in the Master Plan that will impact the floodplain. However, modifications to current plans which result in changes to the topography of the NSSC at or below elevation 140.0 NGVD29 will need to be reevaluated in accordance with Executive Order No. 11988 Floodplain Management.

6.4 Clean Air Act Conformity

Section 176 (c) of the Clean Air Act (CAA) requires that Federal agencies assure that their activities are in conformance with Federally-approved CAA state implementation plans for geographic areas designated as non-attainment and maintenance areas under the CAA. The U. S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) General Conformity Rule to implement Section 176 (c) is found at 40 CFR Part 93. Clean Air Act compliance, specifically with the USEPA's General Conformity Rule, requires that all Federal agencies, review new actions and decide whether the actions would worsen an existing National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) violation, cause a new NAAQS violation, delay the State Implementation Plan (SIP) attainment schedule of the NAAQS, or otherwise contradict the State's SIP. However, in accordance with 40 CFR § 93.153(c) 2 (xii), Federal actions involving planning, studies and provision of technical assistance are considered actions that "would result in no emissions increase or an increase in emission that is clearly de minimis" and as such, a review under the

General Conformity Rule of the Master Plan is not required. A Record of Non-Applicability (RONA), signed by the facility environmental coordinator, is attached to document this exemption.

With regard to individual construction and operation projects as discussed in the NSSC Master Plan, some projects may be exempt from the preparation of a conformity review pursuant to CRF § 93.153 (c) and (d) (e.g., CRF § 93.153 (c) (iv) Routine maintenance and repair activities, including repair and maintenance of administrative sites, roads, trails and facilities). If the Federal action is not eligible for an exemption, a general conformity review should be conducted. Calculations of the worst-case project specific emissions of VOCs and NO_x would need to be prepared to determine whether project emissions exceed the General Conformity Trigger Levels and if the project is regionally significant. A project would be considered regionally significant if its emissions exceed 10% of the state's total emissions budget for the criteria pollutants (40 CFR 93.153 (i)). If a project is under the General Conformity Trigger Levels and is not regionally significant, a RONA would be prepared and signed by the facility environmental compliance coordinator. If individual Master Plan projects exceed these thresholds, then a full general conformity determination would need to be prepared.

In addition, the NSSC is currently subject to permitting for the operation of the boiler plant. Pursuant to 310 CMR 7.00, the NSSC is regulated under a 50% rule cap for NO_x and SO_x pollutants facility wide and must maintain past 5-year fuel usage records, emission records for past 24 months emission to demonstrate compliance. When new equipment is installed, the NSSC needs to track whether 50% cap for NO_x and SO_x is exceeded. In addition, the NSSC facility is currently operating close to the Massachusetts annual threshold from CO₂ emissions (i.e. 5,000 tons versus the federal limit of 25,000 tons). Prior to the implementation of Master Plan project construction, the NSSC will need to determine if new projects could trigger additional reporting or other state related global warming requirements.

6.5 Cumulative Impacts

The Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) definition of cumulative impacts as found in 40 Code of Federal Regulation (CFR) section 1508.7 is as follows: "Cumulative Impact is the impact on the environment which results from the incremental impact of the action when added to other past, present and reasonably foreseeable future actions regardless of what agency (Federal or nonfederal) or persons undertakes such other acts." This Master Plan EA is being completed pursuant to AR 210-20 Real Property Master Planning of Army Installations (16 May 2005). The Master Plan preferred Alternative provides areas to accommodate new mission growth, provides additional administrative, storage, and parking facilities and incorporates all the known design requirements that were identified at the current time. It also maintains the installation design vision of a walkable campus environment, allows for the consolidation of housing onto the installation, provides a consolidated industrial area, perimeter and structured parking, and recreation and green space areas. The demolition and construction necessary to accomplish this goal will be conducted within the same footprint of previous NSSC installation. Therefore, no negative cumulative impacts are anticipated as a result of the proposed project.

7.0 LIST OF PREPARERS

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New England District

Name	Title	Education/Responsibility	Experience
Judith L. Johnson	Biologist	B.S. Wildlife Biology. Responsible for the NEPA document preparation	32 years
Kathleen A. Atwood	Archaeologist	M.A. Responsible for compliance with National Historic Preservation Act	25 years

8.0 COORDINATION

The focus of the Master Plan process was to garner as much collaboration and information from stakeholders while developing design requirement and solutions. The Urban Collaborative, Inc design team held design programming workshops on 9-10 November 2009 and 16-17 November 2009 with stakeholders from the NSSC and Town of Natick. Coordination was also undertaken with the agencies listed below during the preparation of the Environmental Assessment and through the Notice of Availability 30-day public notice process (see Appendix A for letters of response).

Federal

- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
- U.S. Natural Resources Conservation Service

State

- Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection
- Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation
 - Division of Resource Conservation
 - Massachusetts Department of Fisheries, Wildlife and Law Enforcement
 - Division of Fish and Wildlife
 - Massachusetts Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program
- Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs
 - Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act (MEPA) Office
 - Massachusetts Historic Preservation Office

Local

- Town of Natick – Town Administrator and Selectmen Office

Natick Soldier Systems Center Restoration Advisory Board (RAB)
Cochituate State Park Advisory Committee
Natick Conservation Commission

Tribes

Wampanoag Tribe of Gay Head (Aquinnah)

A Notice of Availability of the Draft Environmental Assessment (EA) was published in local newspapers (see Appendix B) requesting comments during a 30-day period from June 15 to July 15, 2012. Copies of the Draft EA, Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) and Record of Non-Applicability (RONA) were available on the U.S. Army Soldier Systems Center webpage, and at the local libraries. The Notice of Availability of the Draft EA, FONSI and RONA was also sent to Federal, state and local agencies with interest or jurisdiction with the project. As per a request from a few neighboring residents, the Natick Soldier Systems Center Restoration Advisory Board, the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation and the Cochituate State Park Advisory Committee, the comment review period was extended from July 15, 2012 to November 20, 2012. The following narrative is a summary of comments received during the public notice process.

Neighboring Residents

A few residents in the neighborhood abutting the Natick Soldier Systems Center (NSSC) expressed concern about the proposed egresses onto Third Street, the size of the Parking Facility proposed to be built in the North Campus Industrial Area adjacent to Third Street, and the disposition of a large crane currently erected on the NSSC property. The NSSC responded to these questions and provided additional information in a series of emails dating from June 27 to November 1, 2012. Resident concerns were addressed as summarized below.

The Master Plan identified one main entrance to the NSSC, where Kansas and Third Street meets on the corner, and two egresses which exit onto Third Street from the Parking Facility. In response to abutter concerns, the Natick Commander provided approval to revise plans to have the Parking Facility exits onto Third Street be used only for emergency release (i.e., impending snow storm, terrorist event, etc.). Normal traffic will be via Kansas Street.

A rendering of the proposed Parking Facility was provided to residents in an email dated September 12, 2012. As shown in the drawing, only one story and a half would be exposed to Third Street and landscaped. The building will be constructed within a depression on the NSSC property and as such, there will be two stories below the current street grade, one parking level at the current street grade and one parking level on the roof with a parapet around the edge to conceal the parked cars on the roof level. The approximate height of the structure visible to Third Street is 15 feet.

The large metal crane currently in view from the surround community is a Roller/Drop

Test Facility and Tower and is used for associated work on-going at the NSSC. The Master Plan has this tower relocated further North West in the current North Campus Industrial Area.

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

No land use restrictions were incorporated in the 2001 Record of Decision (ROD) for on-site groundwater contamination. In 2002, the U.S Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) developed draft guidance for Evaluating the Vapor Intrusion to Indoor Air Pathway from Groundwater and Soil. The EPA was concerned about the potential for vapor intrusion into residential construction if the new construction is over an existing plume area. As stated in an email dated August 1, 2012 from the NSSC to the EPA, should a risk assessment indicate that subsurface vapor intrusion might pose an unacceptable risk to future inhabitants of a proposed residential structure or to workers in a proposed industrial structure planned for immediately above or within 100 feet down gradient of a plume of contaminated groundwater, the Army will evaluate and will discuss with the EPA the design of the structure to incorporate vapor barriers, to eliminate the potential risk. No further comments were received from the EPA.

Natick Soldier Systems Center Restoration Advisory Board (RAB), the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (MA DCR) and the Cochituate State Park Advisory Committee (CSPAC)

The Natick Soldier Systems Center RAB, the MA DCR and the CSPAC were similarly concern about sustaining the long-term conservation and public recreation attributes of the Cochituate State Park and as such, will be summarized concurrently in this section. Natick Soldier Systems Center (NSSC) personnel attended three CSPAC meetings (September 12, October 10 and November 14, 2012) to discuss proposed Master Plan projects with attending committee members, citizens and other agencies (i.e., Natick Conservation Commission, etc.). Based upon feedback received at the September 12, 2012 CSPAC meeting, renderings of before and after conditions of proposed Master Plan projects on the west and east side of the NSSC campus from the Lake Cochituate perspective were prepared. These renderings are provided on the following pages.

Existing Conditions – West side of the NSSC (from Lake Cochituate)



New west side NSSC Buildings (P and Q) without trees just to show the buildings



New west side NSSC buildings (P and Q) with existing trees and new trees in front



Existing Conditions – East side of NSSC (from Lake Cochituate)



New east side NSSC buildings (R) without trees just to show buildings



New east side NSSC buildings (R) with existing trees and new trees in front



The renderings were shown by the NSSC at the November 14, 2012 CSPAC meeting.

Additional design guideline modifications were discussed and subsequently formalized in a joint letter from the MA DCR/CSPAC to the NSSC dated November 19, 2012 (see Appendix B – Correspondence Received). As requested by the MA DCR/CSPAC, the renderings will be incorporated into the Master Plan Design Guidelines. In addition, the following additional modifications or guidelines, as noted in the November 19, 2012 letter, will also be added to the Master Plan Design Guideline.

- No two-tone color exteriors will be used for the exterior of buildings facing the lake (dark earth tone colors will be used).
- Lighting will be downward or shaded lighting on new buildings/structures facing the lake.
- The NSSC will reestablish more of a buffer width, dependent on site conditions, for proposed building P, Q and R, adding trees along the shoreline to screen buildings, including coniferous trees.
- Signage/markers will be used to inform construction workers of vegetated areas that should not be disturbed or cut (signage will be maintained through construction and landscaping).
- Noise level will not exceed current levels.
- Water access will be the same as the current access including the NSSC boat ramp.
- Coordination will continue between the NSSC and the CSPAC (e.g., attendance at CSPAC meetings).
- The NSSC will notify the MA DCR and CSPAC when each component of work activities will commence.

9.0 COMPLIANCE WITH ENVIRONMENTAL FEDERAL STATUTES AND EXECUTIVE ORDERS

Federal Statutes

1. Archaeological Resources Protection Act of 1979, as amended, 16 USC 470 et seq.

Compliance: Issuance of a permit from the Federal land manager to excavate or remove archaeological resources located on public or Indian lands signifies compliance.

2. Preservation of Historic and Archeological Data Act of 1974, as amended, 16 U.S.C. 469 et seq.

Compliance: Project has been coordinated with the State Historic Preservation officer. Impacts to archaeological resources will be mitigated.

3. American Indian Religious Freedom Act of 1978, 42 U.S.C. 1996.

Compliance: Must ensure access by Native Americans to sacred sites, possession of sacred objects, and the freedom to worship through ceremonials and traditional rites.

4. Clean Air Act (CAA), as amended, 42 U.S.C. 7401 et seq.

Compliance: In accordance with 40 CFR 93.153(c) 2 (xii), Federal actions involving planning, studies and provision of technical assistance are considered actions that “would result in no emissions increase or an increase in emission that is clearly de minimis” and as such, a General Conformity review of Master Plan Environmental Assessment is not required. However, future construction and operation projects (as discussed in the Master Plan) will need to be assessed under the General Conformity Rule prior to project implementation.

5. Clean Water Act of 1977 (Federal Water Pollution Control Act Amendments of 1972) 33 U.S.C. 1251 et seq.

Compliance: Not Applicable; project does not involve the discharge of dredged or fill material into a water of the U.S. However, individual projects located within the Eastside Housing and Recreation Area will need further assessment to determine compliance with the Clean Water Act prior to construction.

6. Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972, as amended, 16 U.S.C. 1451 et seq.

Compliance: Not Applicable; project is not located within the State designated coastal zone.

7. Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended, 16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.

Compliance: Coordination with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) consultation website

determined no formal consultation requirements pursuant to Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act were required.

8. Estuarine Areas Act, 16 U.S.C. 1221 et seq.

Compliance: Not applicable; report is not being submitted to Congress.

9. Federal Water Project Recreation Act, as amended, 16 U.S.C. 4601-12 et seq.

Compliance: Public notice of availability to the project report to the National Park Service (NPS) and Office of Statewide Planning relative to the Federal and State comprehensive outdoor recreation plans signifies compliance with this Act.

10. Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act, as amended, 16 U.S.C. 661 et seq.

Compliance: Projects are exempt include “activities for or in connection with programs primarily for land management and use carried out by Federal agencies with respect to Federal land under their jurisdiction” pursuant to 16 U.S.C. § 662 (h).

11. Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965, as amended, 16 U.S.C. 4601-4 et seq.

Compliance: Public notice of the availability of this report to the National Park Service (NPS) and the Office of Statewide Planning relative to the Federal and State comprehensive outdoor recreation plans signifies compliance with this Act.

12. Marine Protection, Research, and Sanctuaries Act of 1971, as amended, 33 U.S.C. 1401 et seq.

Compliance: Not applicable; the project does not involve the transportation or disposal of dredged material in ocean waters pursuant to Sections 102 and 103 of the Act, respectively.

13. National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, 16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.

Compliance: Coordination with the State Historic Preservation Office signifies compliance.

14. Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA), 25 U.S.C. 3000-3013, 18 U.S.C. 1170

Compliance: Regulations implementing NAGPRA will be followed if discovery of human remains and/or funerary items occur during implementation of this project.

15. National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended, 42 U.S.C 4321 et seq.

Compliance: Preparation of an Environmental Assessment signifies partial compliance with NEPA. Full compliance shall be noted at the time the Finding of No Significant Impact is issued.

16. Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899, as amended, 33 U.S.C. 401 et seq.

Compliance: No requirements for projects or programs authorized by Congress.

17. Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Act as amended, 16 U.S.C 1001 et seq.

Compliance: Due to the topography of the Natick Soldier Systems Center property, the floodplain is limited to a narrow area along the property periphery. The projects proposed in the Master Plan are not located within the 100 year floodplain.

18. Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, as amended, 16 U.S.C 1271 et seq.

Compliance: Not applicable.

19. Magnuson-Stevens Act, as amended, 16 U.S.C. 1801 et seq.

Compliance: Not applicable.

Executive Orders

1. Executive Order 11593, Protection and Enhancement of the Cultural Environment, 13 May 1971

Compliance: Coordination with the State Historic Preservation Officer signifies compliance.

2. Executive Order 11988, Floodplain Management, 24 May 1977 amended by Executive Order 12148, 20 July 1979.

Compliance: Public notice of the availability of this report or public review fulfills the requirements of Executive Order 11988, Section 2(a) (2).

3. Executive Order 11990, Protection of Wetlands, 24 May 1977.

Compliance: Public notice of the availability if this report for public review fulfills the requirements of Executive Order 11990, Section 2 (b).

4. Executive Order 12114, Environmental Effects Abroad of Major Federal Actions, 4 January 1979.

Compliance: Not applicable to projects located within the United States.

5. Executive Order 12898, Environmental Justice, 11 February 1994.

Compliance: Not applicable; the project is not expected to have a significant impact on minority or low-income population, or any other population in the United States.

6. Executive 13007, Accommodation of Sacred Sites, 24 May 1996

Compliance: Not applicable unless on Federal lands, then agencies must accommodate access to and ceremonial use of Indian sacred sites by Indian religious practitioners, and avoid adversely affecting the physical integrity of such sacred sites.

7. Executive Order 13045, Protection of Children from Environmental Health Risks and Safety Risks. 21 April, 1997.

Compliance: Not applicable if the project would not create a disproportionate environmental health or safety risk for children.

8. Executive Order 13175, Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribal Governments, 6 November 2000.

Compliance: Consultation with Indian Tribal Governments, where applicable, and consistent with executive memoranda, DoD Indian policy, and USACE Tribal Policy Principles signifies compliance.

Executive Memorandum

Analysis of Impacts on Prime or Unique Agricultural Lands in Implementing NEPA, 11 August 1980.

Compliance: Coordination with the Natural Resources Conservation Service has yielded a determination that the NSSC is urban land and as such is exempt from the Farmland Protection Policy Act.

White House Memorandum, Government-to-Government Relations with Indian Tribes, 29 April 1994.

Compliance: Consultation with Federally Recognized Indian Tribes, where appropriate, signifies compliance.

10.0 REFERENCES CITED

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11.0 LIST OF ACRONYMS

AR – Army Regulation
AT/FP – Antiterrorism Force Protection
EA - Environmental Assessment
CAA – Clean Air Act
CEQ - Council of Environmental Quality
CFR – Code of Federal Regulation
CX – Categorical Exclusion
DPW – Department of Public Works
EA – Environmental Assessment
EIS – Environmental Impact Statement
FEMA – Federal Emergency Management Agency
FIRM – Federal Insurance Rate Map
FONSI – Finding of No Significant Impact
FPPA - Farmland Protection Policy Act
GIS – Geographic Information System
IMCOM - Installation Management Command
ISU – International Salvage Union
LRC - Long Range Component
MA DCR – Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation
MA DEP – Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection
MA PGP – Massachusetts Programmatic General Permit
MA DPH – Massachusetts Department of Public Health
MESA - Massachusetts Endangered Species Act
MOUT - Military Operation in Urban Terrain
MS4 – Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System
NAAQS – National Ambient Air Quality Standards

NEPA - National Environmental Policy Act
NCTRF – Navy clothing and Textile Research Facility
NPDES – National Pollution Discharge Elimination System
NRCS – Natural Resources Conservation Service
NSSC - Natick Soldiers Systems Center
PCBs – Polychlorinated Byphenyls
PM FSS – Program Manager Force Sustainment Systems
PM SCIE – Program Manager Soldier Clothing Individual Equipment
REC – Record of Consideration
ROD – Record of Decision
RONA – Record of Non-Applicability
RPMP – Real Property Master Plan
SIP – State Implementation Plan
SSCOM - U.S. Army Soldier Systems Command
SWMP – Stormwater Management Program
USARIEM - U.S. Army Research Institute of Environmental Medicine
USEPA – U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
USFWS - U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
VOC – Volatile Organic Compound
WPA – Massachusetts Wetland Protection Act

RECORD OF NON-APPLICABILITY (RONA)

GENERAL CONFORMITY - RECORD OF NON-APPLICABILITY

Project/Action Name: Natick Soldier Systems Center Master Plan

Project/Action Point of Contact: *Judith Johnson, USACE Biologist*
Phone: 978-318-8138


Begin Date: *September 1, 2013*

End Date: *September 1, 2018*

In accordance with 40 CFR § 93.153(c) 2 (xii), Federal actions involving planning, studies and provision of technical assistance are considered actions that "would result in no emissions increase or an increase in emission that is clearly de minimis" and as such, a General Conformity review of the Master Plan Environmental Assessment is not required.

Date: *Sep 11, 2013*

Signed: _____


John McHugh
Natick Labs CTV USA IMCOM
Director, Environmental & Safety

Appendix A – Building Inventory

Source: 17 December 2010 Natick Soldiers Systems Center, Area Development Plans prepared by The Urban Collaborative, LLC

North Campus Industrial Building Inventory

Building Number	Building Name	Type
7	Prendergast Building	Laboratory
8	Nee Building	Industrial
10	Pump House	Utility
12	Former Electrical Substation (concrete pad and fence remain)	Utility
14	Burt Building	Industrial
13		
20	Warehouse	Office/Industrial
24	Small Building (temporary)	Storage
26	Small Building (temporary)	Storage
27	Small Building (temporary)	Storage
T-25	Hazardous Waste Storage Area	Storage
44	Administrative	Administrative
62	Environmental Store House	Utility
66	Roller Test	Research
68	Environmental Store House	Storage
72	Small Building	Storage
73	Flammable Material Storage	Utility
75	Connex Storage (No Structure)	Storage
77	Combustion Test Facility	Research
79	Salt Shed	Storage
81	Drop Test Tower	Research
85	Shed	Storage
93	Hazardous Waste Acclimation	Storage
94	Pumping Facility	Groundwater Remediation
110	Uoellette Thermal Test	Research
111	PM-FSS Building	Fabrication

Housing Building Inventory

Building Number	Building Name	Type
46 to 60 (Note: Building 60 was removed in 2010)	Housing	Family Housing

South Campus Research Building Inventory

Building Number	Building Name	Type
1	Carney Hall	Office/Commercial
2	Doriot Climate Chambers	Laboratory
3	MacGillivray Hall	Office
4	MacArthur Hall	Office
5	Whittlesey Building	Laboratory
15	Johnson Barracks and DFAC	Barracks
16	Beaudoin Building	Laboratory
18		
19	Boiler House	Industrial
22	Concrete Block Building	Former Hazardous Material Storage
30	Murphy Clinic	Office
32	Lord Community Center	Commercial
33	Pool	Recreation
34	Former Wading Pool (filled with concrete)	Recreation
36	Bainbridge Building	Office/Laboratory
38	Hall Building	Office
39	Main Gate	Gate House
40	Bath House	Special Use
42	Wood Building	Office/Laboratory
45	Barnes Building (PWB)	Office/Laboratory/ Industrial
63	Shed	Utility
64	Electrical Transformer	Utility
71	Flagpole	Flagpole

78	Tobin Building	Office
80	Vittori Building	Office
86	Search Building	Office/Laboratory
89	Low Level Radiation Storage	Industrial
92	Gifford Building	Training (future)
95	Central Chemical Issue	Office
112	Trailer	Lab

Appendix B – Correspondence Received



United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

New England Field Office
70 Commercial Street, Suite 300
Concord, NH 03301-5087
<http://www.fws.gov/newengland>



January 3, 2011

To Whom It May Concern:

This project was reviewed for the presence of federally-listed or proposed, threatened or endangered species or critical habitat per instructions provided on the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's New England Field Office website:

<http://www.fws.gov/newengland/EndangeredSpec-Consultation.htm>

Based on the information currently available, no federally-listed or proposed, threatened or endangered species or critical habitat under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) are known to occur in the project area(s). Preparation of a Biological Assessment or further consultation with us under section 7 of the Endangered Species Act is not required.

This concludes the review of listed species and critical habitat in the project location(s) and environs referenced above. No further Endangered Species Act coordination of this type is necessary for a period of one year from the date of this letter, unless additional information on listed or proposed species becomes available.

Thank you for your cooperation. Please contact Mr. Anthony Tur of this office at 603-223-2541 if we can be of further assistance.

Sincerely yours,

Thomas R. Chapman
Supervisor
New England Field Office



Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Division of Fisheries & Wildlife

Wayne E. MacCallum, Director

July 06, 2011

Judith Johnson
US Army Corps of Engineers
896 Virginia Road
Concord MA 01742-2731

RE: Project Location: 15 Kansas Street Natick Soldier Systems Center
Town: Natick
NHESP Tracking Num: 11-29634

To Whom It May Concern,

Thank you for contacting the Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program ("NHESP") of the MA Division of Fisheries & Wildlife for information regarding state listed rare species in the vicinity of the above referenced site. Based on the information provided, this project site, or a portion thereof, is located within *Priority Habitat 200* (PH 200) and *Estimated Habitat 95* (EH 95) as indicated in the *Massachusetts Natural Heritage Atlas* (13th Edition). Our database indicates that the following state listed rare species have been found in the vicinity of the site:

<u>Scientific name</u>	<u>Common Name</u>	<u>Taxonomic Group</u>	<u>State Status</u>
<i>Ligumia nasuta</i>	Eastern Pondmussel	Mussel	Special Concern

The species listed above is protected under the Massachusetts Endangered Species Act (MESA) (M.G.L. c. 131A) and its implementing regulations (321 CMR 10.00). State-listed wildlife are also protected under the state's Wetlands Protection Act (WPA) (M.G.L. c. 131, s. 40) and its implementing regulations (310 CMR 10.00). Fact sheets for most state-listed rare species can be found on our website (www.nhesp.org).

Please note that projects and activities located within *Priority* and/or *Estimated Habitat* must be reviewed by the NHESP for compliance with the state-listed rare species protection provisions of MESA (321 CMR 10.00) and/or the WPA (310 CMR 10.00).

Wetlands Protection Act (WPA)

If the project site is within *Estimated Habitat* and a Notice of Intent (NOI) is required, then a copy of the NOI must be submitted to the NHESP so that it is received at the same time as the local conservation commission. If the NHESP determines that the proposed project will adversely affect the actual Resource Area habitat of state-protected wildlife, then the proposed project may not be permitted (310 CMR 10.27, 10.38(4)(b) & 10.59). In such a case, the project proponent may request a consultation with the NHESP to discuss potential project design modifications that would avoid adverse effects to rare wildlife habitat.

A streamlined joint MESA/WPA review process is available. When filing a Notice of Intent (NOI), the applicant may file concurrently under the MESA on the same NOI form and qualify for a 30-day streamlined joint review. For a copy of the NOI form, please visit the MA Department of Environmental Protection's website: <http://www.mass.gov/dep/water/approvals/wpaform3.doc>, www.masswildlife.org

Division of Fisheries and Wildlife

Field Headquarters, North Drive, Westborough, MA 01581 (508) 389-6300 Fax (508) 389-7897

An Agency of the Department of Fish and Game

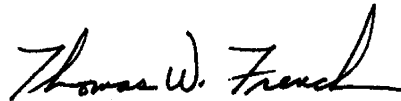
MA Endangered Species Act (MESA)

If the proposed project is located within Priority Habitat and is not exempt from review (see 321 CMR 10.14), then project plans, a fee, and other required materials must be sent to NHESP Regulatory Review to determine whether a probable "take" under the MA Endangered Species Act would occur (321 CMR 10.18). Please note that all proposed and anticipated development must be disclosed, as MESA does not allow project segmentation (321 CMR 10.16). For a MESA filing checklist and additional information please see our website: www.nhesp.org ("Regulatory Review" tab).

We recommend that rare species habitat concerns be addressed during the project design phase prior to submission of a formal MESA filing, as avoidance and minimization of impacts to rare species and their habitats is likely to expedite endangered species regulatory review.

This evaluation is based on the most recent information available in the Natural Heritage database, which is constantly being expanded and updated through ongoing research and inventory. If you have any questions regarding this letter please contact Amy Coman-Hoenig, Endangered Species Review Assistant, at (508) 389-6364.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Thomas W. French". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

Thomas W. French, Ph.D.
Assistant Director



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

William Francis Galvin, Secretary of the Commonwealth
Massachusetts Historical Commission

October 4, 2011

H. Farrell McMillan
Chief
Engineering/Planning Division
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
New England District
696 Virginia Road
Concord, MA 01742-2751

Attn: Kate Atwood

RE: Natick Soldier Systems Center (SSC) Draft Integrated Cultural Resources Management Plan,
Natick, MA. MHIC # RC.42310. PALE 2413. CNAE Contract #W912WJ-09-D-0001-36.

Dear Mr. McMillan:

Thank you for the opportunity to review the report, *Natick Soldier Systems Center Integrated Cultural Resource Management Plan, Natick, Massachusetts Contract No. W912WJ-09-D-0001-36*, submitted to the Massachusetts Historical Commission, received September 19, 2011, for the project referenced above.

MHIC has no substantive comments on the report. The report is well written and may assist the Corps in the refinement of the cultural resource management portion of the facilities master plan update. The results of the archival documentation and archaeological survey provide important information on the ancient and modern uses of the property. If the draft is revised, please send a copy of the final version.

MHIC looks forward to continued consultation, and to reviewing the additional information referenced in your cover letter, including the draft Programmatic Agreement, for future developments at the facility.

These comments are provided to assist in compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (36 CFR 800), and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Archeology and Historic Preservation (43 Fed. Reg. 190(1983)). If you have any immediate questions please contact Jonathan K. Patton at this office.

Sincerely,

Brona Simon
State Historic Preservation Officer
Executive Director
State Archaeologist
Massachusetts Historical Commission

cc: Deborah C. Cox, PALE, Attn: Jennifer Banister

220 Morrissey Boulevard, Boston, Massachusetts 02125
(617) 727-8470 • Fax: (617) 727-5128
www.sec.state.ma.us/mhic

November 19, 2012 letter submitted jointly between the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) and the Cochituate State Park Advisory Committee (CSPAC)



November 19, 2012

Ms. Judith Johnson
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Evaluation Branch
696 Virginia Road
Concord, Massachusetts 01742-2751

Re: Draft Environmental Assessment (EA) and Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for
the U.S. Army Natick Soldier Systems Center Master Plan

Dear Ms. Johnson:

The Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) and the Cochituate State Park Advisory Committee (CSPAC) are pleased to jointly submit the following comments on the Draft EA and FONSI. DCR, with collaborative input and volunteer support from the CSPAC, manages Cochituate State Park to sustain and balance the long-term conservation and public recreation attributes of this beautiful public park.

Firstly, we want to compliment the U.S. Army Natick Soldier Systems Center and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers on the flexible and accommodating approach that has been taken regarding DCR and CSPAC requests for additional review time, and attendance at CSPAC meetings to explain the Master Plan components in more detail. We are also heartened that the Master Plan includes improved drainage and removal of a significant amount of impervious surface.

In response to our initial concerns we have received confirmation from the proponent that:

- Earth tone colors will be used for the exterior of buildings facing the lake along the peninsula, and there will be no two-tone color exteriors on buildings facing the lake. *We would like to request that the earth tone colors be of darker hue.*
- With regard to lighting, there will be downward or shaded lighting on new buildings/structures facing the lake.

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS • EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF ENERGY & ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

Department of Conservation and Recreation

25 Shattuck Street

Lowell, MA 01852

978-952-2092 / 978-927-2092 Fax

www.mass.gov/dcr



David L. Patrick
Governor

Timothy R. Murray
Lt. Governor

Richard K. Sullivan III, Secretary Executive Office of
Energy & Environmental Affairs

Edward H. Hartnett III, Commissioner
Department of Conservation & Recreation

- The U.S. Army Natick Soldiers Systems Center will also commit to reestablishing more of a buffer, width dependent on site conditions, for proposed buildings P and Q. *We would like to add building R to this request.*

Additional elements that we request for inclusion in the Design Guide for the Master Plan and consideration when the project components are implemented:

- Before and after view sheds as shown to CSPAC by Mr. John McHugh at the 11/14/2012 meeting added to the Design Guide.
- Information to construction workers using signage and markers to visually identify vegetated areas to not cut or disturb along the shoreline, in order to deter accidental removal of existing screening during construction. Keep signage/markings up until construction and landscaping is complete.
- Add trees along the shoreline areas to fully screen buildings including "P,Q & R" and including coniferous type for more year round coverage.
- Noise levels not to exceed current levels.
- Water access will be the same as the current access including the NSSC boat ramp.
- Recommend that a volunteer NSSC base resident attend the Cechituate State Park Advisory Committee monthly meetings in order to keep others at the base up to date on park recreational and environmental activities and issues. CSPAC believes this is important for the sense of community that the committee promotes with local residents and all park users.
- Request that DCR and CSPAC be notified when each component of work activities will commence.

Thanks you again for the opportunity to review and comment on the Master Plan. We look forward to continuing our good relation with the objective of maintaining water quality and other important aspects of the lake and state park resources.

Sincerely,



Susan Hamilton
DCR Division of State Parks
North Region Director



Sandra Brennan
CSPAC Chairman

Appendix C - Notice of Availability of the Draft Environmental Assessment

C

**PUBLIC NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY
DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT AND FINDING OF
NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT FOR THE U.S. ARMY NATICK SOLDIER SYSTEMS CENTER MASTER PLAN,
NATICK, MASSACHUSETTS**

Pursuant to the Council on Environmental Quality regulations for implementing the procedural provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act (40 CFR 1500), and 32 CFR 651 Environmental Analysis of Army Actions, the U.S. Army conducted an Environmental Assessment (EA) of the potential environmental and socioeconomic effects associated with the U.S. Army Natick Soldier Systems Center Master Plan located in Natick, Massachusetts.

The most recent Army Natick Soldier Systems Center (NSSC) Real Property Master Plan, Long Range Component (LRC), is dated February 2004 and is currently being updated. The Master Plan document serves as a guide for coordination of project development and management of all land and water resources on an Army installation. Master Plan project development provides for adequate Force Protection/Anti-Terrorism measures; provides modern and efficient facilities to accommodate multiple functions and users; considers functional relationships to adjacent facilities; and provides sustainable design, functional perimeter parking and compatible architectural features. The Master Plan completion process ensures there is a coordinated and well thought out implementation plan to meet the installation functional mission goals and future operational requirements in conjunction with installation resource capabilities and sustainability. The evaluation period of the Master Plans is 20 years with periodic updates and revisions as installation change dictates or, at a minimum, all components will be reviewed every 5 years (Army Regulation (AR) 210-20 Real Property Master Planning of Army Installations, 16 May 2005).

The Real Property Master Plan (RPMP) is a decision-support document and the recommended or proposed actions must be assessed for their environmental effects in accordance with AR 210-20. An Environmental Assessment (EA) is completed to evaluate the potential impacts and cumulative effects of projects being proposed in the RPMP. The EA also provides responsible and timely protection, conservation, and enhancement of project environmental and cultural resources and ensures environmental mandates and considerations are incorporated in the planning process.

The Draft EA and Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) will undergo a 30-day public comment period, from June 15, 2012 through July 15, 2012. This is in accordance with requirements specified in 32 CFR Part 651.14 Environmental Analysis of Army Actions. During this period, the public may submit comments on the proposed action and the EA.

The Draft EA and FONSI can be accessed on the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New England District website at: <http://www.nae.usace.army.mil/>; in the drop down menu under the "Projects" tab, click "Massachusetts" and then click "Natick Soldier Systems Center Master Plan, Natick, MA", then under "Contents" click on "Projects" and then click on "Draft Environmental Assessment and Finding of No Significant Impact". The Draft EA and FONSI are also available on the U.S. Army Natick Soldier Systems Center website at: <http://www.natick.army.mil/garrison/>; click on "View NSSC Master Plan Environmental Assessment Here".

Printed copies of the Draft EA and FONSI can also be viewed at the following local libraries:

Bacon Free Library
58 Elliot Street
Natick, MA 01760

Morse Institute
14 East Central Street
Natick, MA 01760

Comments on the Draft EA and FONSI should be submitted during the 30-day public comment period via mail, fax, or electronic mail to:

Ms. Judith Johnson
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Evaluation Branch
696 Virginia Road
Concord, Massachusetts 01742-2751
fax: (978) 318-8560
e-mail: judith.l.johnson@usace.army.mil

Legal Notices were placed in the Metrowest Daily News and the Natick Bulletin & Tab on Friday, June 15, 2012.

**Appendix D - Construction General Permit (CGP) Part 10: Permit
Conditions Applicable to Specific States**

8.2 Water Quality Protection

If there is evidence indicating that the stormwater discharges authorized by this permit cause, have the reasonable potential to cause or contribute to an excursion above any applicable water quality standard, you may be required to obtain an individual permit in accordance with Part 2.6 of this permit, or the permit may be modified to include different limitations and/or requirements.

8.3 Timing of Permit Modification

EPA may elect to modify the permit prior to its expiration (rather than waiting for the new permit cycle) to comply with any new statutory or regulatory requirements, such as for effluent limitation guidelines that may be promulgated in the course of the current permit cycle.

PART 9: STANDARD PERMIT CONDITIONS

The federal regulations require that the Standard Conditions provisioned at 40 CFR §122.41 be applied to all NPDES permits. You are required to comply with those Standard Conditions, details of which are provided in Appendix G.

PART 10: PERMIT CONDITIONS APPLICABLE TO SPECIFIC STATES, INDIAN COUNTRY, OR TERRITORIES

The provisions of this Part provide modifications or additions to the applicable conditions of this permit to reflect specific additional conditions required as part of the state or tribal CWA Section 401 certification process, or the Coastal Zone Management Act (CZMA) certification process, or as otherwise established by the permitting authority. The specific additional revisions and requirements only apply to activities in those specific states, Indian country, and federal facilities. States, Indian country, and federal facilities not included in this Part do not have any modifications or additions to the applicable conditions of this permit.

A. Region 1

1. MAR100000: Commonwealth of Massachusetts, except Indian country
 - a. State Water Quality Statutes, Regulations, and Policies:
 - i. You must comply with the Massachusetts Clean Waters Act (Ch. 21, ss. 26-53).
 - ii. You must comply with the conditions in 314 CMR 4.00 - Surface Water Quality Standards.
 - iii. You must comply with the conditions in 314 CMR 3.00 - Surface Water Discharge Permit Program.
 - iv. You must comply with the Wetlands Protection Act, Ch. 131, s. 40 and its regulations, 310 CMR 10.00 and any order of Conditions issued by a Conservation Commission or a Superseding Order of Conditions issued by the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection.

- b. Department of Environmental Protection Storm Water Management Policy:
 - i. You must comply with the Massachusetts Storm Water Management Policy, and applicable Storm Water Performance Standards, as prescribed by state regulations promulgated under the authority of the Massachusetts Clean Waters Act, MGL Ch. 21, ss. 26-53 and the Wetlands Protection Act Ch. 131, s. 40.
- c. Other State Environmental Laws, Regulations, Policies:
 - i. You must comply with the Massachusetts Endangered Species Act [MESA] (MGL Ch. 313A and regulations at 321 CMR 10.00) and any actions undertaken to comply with this storm water permit, shall not result in non-compliance with the MESA.
 - ii. You must not conduct activities under this permit that will interfere with implementation of mosquito control work conducted in accordance with Chapter 252 including, s. 5A thereunder and MassDEP Guideline Number BRP G01-02, West Nile Virus Application of Pesticides to Wetland Resource Areas and Buffer Zones, and Public Water Systems.
- d. Other Department Directives:
 - i. The Department may require you to perform water quality monitoring during the permit term if monitoring is necessary for the protection of public health or the environment as designated under the authority at 314 CMR 3.00.
 - ii. The Department may require you to provide measurable verification of the effectiveness of BMPs and other control measures in your management program, including water quality monitoring.
 - iii. The Department has determined that compliance with this permit does not protect you from enforcement actions deemed necessary by the Department under its associated regulations to address an imminent threat to the public health or a significant adverse environmental impact which results in a violation of the Massachusetts Clean Waters Act, Ch. 21, ss. 26-53.
 - iv. The Department reserves the right to modify the 401 Water Quality Certification if any changes, modifications or deletions are made to the general permit. In addition, the Department reserves the right to add and/or alter the terms and conditions of its 401 Water Quality Certification to carry out its responsibilities during the term of this permit with respect to water quality, including any revisions to 314 CMR 4.00, Surface Water Quality Standards.
- e. Permit Compliance
 - i. Should any violation of the Massachusetts Surface Water Quality Standards (314 CMR 4.00) or the conditions of this certification occur, the Department will direct you to correct the violations(s). The Department has the right to take any action as authorized by the General Laws of the Commonwealth to address the violation of this permit or the MA Clean Waters Act and the regulations promulgated thereunder. Substantial civil and criminal penalties are authorized under MGL Ch. 21, s. 42 for discharging into Massachusetts' waters in violation of an order or permit issued by this Department. This

certification does not relieve you of the duty to comply with other applicable Massachusetts statutes and regulations.

2. NHR100000: State of New Hampshire

- a. If you disturb 100,000 square feet or more of contiguous area, you must also apply for a "Significant Alteration of the Terrain Permit from DES pursuant to RSA 485-A:17 and Env-Ws 415. This requirement applies to the disturbances of only 50,000 square feet when construction occurs within the protected shoreline (see RSA 483-B and Env-Ws 1400).
- b. You must determine that any excavation dewatering discharges are not contaminated before they will be authorized as an allowable non-storm water discharge under this permit (see Subpart 1.3.B). The water is considered uncontaminated if there is no groundwater contamination within 1,000 feet of the discharge. Information on groundwater contamination can be generated over the Internet via the NHDES web site <http://www.des.state.nh.us> (One Stop Data Retrieval, Onestop Master Site Table). The web site also provides E-mail access to an NHDES Site Remediation Contact to answer questions about using the Web site.
- c. You must treat any uncontaminated excavation dewatering discharges as necessary to remove suspended solids and turbidity. The discharges must be sampled at a location prior to mixing with storm water at least once per week during weeks when discharges occur. The samples must be analyzed for total suspended solids (TSS) and must meet monthly average and maximum daily TSS limitations of 50 milligrams per liter (mg/L) and 100 mg/L, respectively. TSS (a.k.a. Residue, Nonfilterable) analysis and sampling must be performed in accordance with Tables IB (parameter, units and method) and II (required containers, preservation techniques and holding times) in 40 CFR 136.3 (see: http://www.access.gpo.gov/nara/cfr/waisidx_02/40cfr136_02.html). Records of any sampling and analysis must be maintained and kept with the SWPPP for at least three years after final site stabilization.
- d. During site design and preparation of the storm water pollution prevention plan (SWPPP), you must consider opportunities for groundwater recharge using on-site infiltration. The SWPPP must include a description of any on-site infiltration that will be installed as a post construction storm water management measure (see Subpart 3.4.E) or reasons for not employing such measures. For design considerations for infiltration measures see the September 2001 DES publication titled "Managing Storm Water as a Valuable Resource" which is available online at: <http://www.des.state.nh.us/StormWater/construction.htm>. Loss of annual recharge to groundwater should be minimized through the use of infiltration measures wherever feasible.

B. Region 2 – No additional requirements.

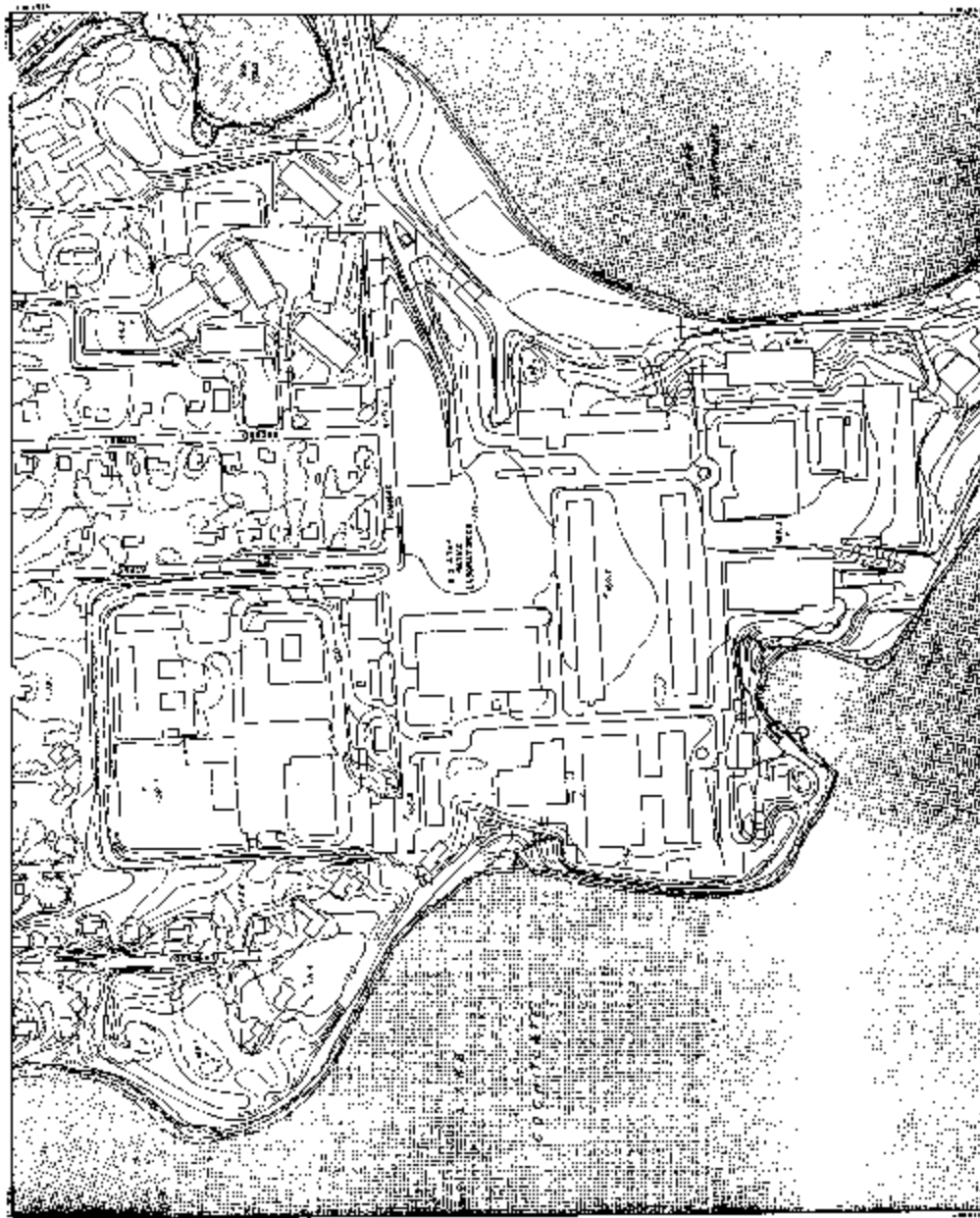
C. Region 5

1. MNR100000: Indian Country within the State of Minnesota

Appendix E – Floodplain Maps

Source: Coffin & Richardson, Inc. Town of Natick Floodplain Map. September 1979.

TOWN OF NATICK, MASSACHUSETTS
ZONING SURVEY




28	29
30	31
32	33
34	35
36	37
38	39
40	41
42	43



REPLACES ALL PREVIOUS
PERMIT AREA
1980/1981 DMR
PLANNED MAPS

PLANNED MAPS
1980/1981 DMR
PLANNED MAPS

A detailed topographic map of a coastal region. On the left, a large body of water is labeled 'LAKE'. To its right is a narrow strip of land containing a 'FISHERY' and a 'ROAD'. Further right is a 'POND' and a large building complex with several streets labeled 'STREET 1', 'STREET 2', and 'STREET 3'. The map features numerous contour lines indicating elevation, with labels such as 120, 130, 140, 150, 160, 170, 180, 190, 200, 210, 220, 230, 240, 250, 260, 270, 280, 290, 300, 310, 320, 330, 340, 350, 360, 370, 380, 390, 400, 410, 420, 430, 440, 450, 460, 470, 480, 490, 500, 510, 520, 530, 540, 550, 560, 570, 580, 590, 600, 610, 620, 630, 640, 650, 660, 670, 680, 690, 700, 710, 720, 730, 740, 750, 760, 770, 780, 790, 800, 810, 820, 830, 840, 850, 860, 870, 880, 890, 900, 910, 920, 930, 940, 950, 960, 970, 980, 990, 1000, 1010, 1020, 1030, 1040, 1050, 1060, 1070, 1080, 1090, 1100, 1110, 1120, 1130, 1140, 1150, 1160, 1170, 1180, 1190, 1200, 1210, 1220, 1230, 1240, 1250, 1260, 1270, 1280, 1290, 1300, 1310, 1320, 1330, 1340, 1350, 1360, 1370, 1380, 1390, 1400, 1410, 1420, 1430, 1440, 1450, 1460, 1470, 1480, 1490, 1500, 1510, 1520, 1530, 1540, 1550, 1560, 1570, 1580, 1590, 1600, 1610, 1620, 1630, 1640, 1650, 1660, 1670, 1680, 1690, 1700, 1710, 1720, 1730, 1740, 1750, 1760, 1770, 1780, 1790, 1800, 1810, 1820, 1830, 1840, 1850, 1860, 1870, 1880, 1890, 1900, 1910, 1920, 1930, 1940, 1950, 1960, 1970, 1980, 1990, 2000, 2010, 2020, 2030, 2040, 2050, 2060, 2070, 2080, 2090, 2100, 2110, 2120, 2130, 2140, 2150, 2160, 2170, 2180, 2190, 2200, 2210, 2220, 2230, 2240, 2250, 2260, 2270, 2280, 2290, 2300, 2310, 2320, 2330, 2340, 2350, 2360, 2370, 2380, 2390, 2400, 2410, 2420, 2430, 2440, 2450, 2460, 2470, 2480, 2490, 2500, 2510, 2520, 2530, 2540, 2550, 2560, 2570, 2580, 2590, 2600, 2610, 2620, 2630, 2640, 2650, 2660, 2670, 2680, 2690, 2700, 2710, 2720, 2730, 2740, 2750, 2760, 2770, 2780, 2790, 2800, 2810, 2820, 2830, 2840, 2850, 2860, 2870, 2880, 2890, 2900, 2910, 2920, 2930, 2940, 2950, 2960, 2970, 2980, 2990, 3000, 3010, 3020, 3030, 3040, 3050, 3060, 3070, 3080, 3090, 3100, 3110, 3120, 3130, 3140, 3150, 3160, 3170, 3180, 3190, 3200, 3210, 3220, 3230, 3240, 3250, 3260, 3270, 3280, 3290, 3300, 3310, 3320, 3330, 3340, 3350, 3360, 3370, 3380, 3390, 3400, 3410, 3420, 3430, 3440, 3450, 3460, 3470, 3480, 3490, 3500, 3510, 3520, 3530, 3540, 3550, 3560, 3570, 3580, 3590, 3600, 3610, 3620, 3630, 3640, 3650, 3660, 3670, 3680, 3690, 3700, 3710, 3720, 3730, 3740, 3750, 3760, 3770, 3780, 3790, 3800, 3810, 3820, 3830, 3840, 3850, 3860, 3870, 3880, 3890, 3900, 3910, 3920, 3930, 3940, 3950, 3960, 3970, 3980, 3990, 4000, 4010, 4020, 4030, 4040, 4050, 4060, 4070, 4080, 4090, 4100, 4110, 4120, 4130, 4140, 4150, 4160, 4170, 4180, 4190, 4200, 4210, 4220, 4230, 4240, 4250, 4260, 4270, 4280, 4290, 4300, 4310, 4320, 4330, 4340, 4350, 4360, 4370, 4380, 4390, 4400, 4410, 4420, 4430, 4440, 4450, 4460, 4470, 4480, 4490, 4500, 4510, 4520, 4530, 4540, 4550, 4560, 4570, 4580, 4590, 4600, 4610, 4620, 4630, 4640, 4650, 4660, 4670, 4680, 4690, 4700, 4710, 4720, 4730, 4740, 4750, 4760, 4770, 4780, 4790, 4800, 4810, 4820, 4830, 4840, 4850, 4860, 4870, 4880, 4890, 4900, 4910, 4920, 4930, 4940, 4950, 4960, 4970, 4980, 4990, 5000, 5010, 5020, 5030, 5040, 5050, 5060, 5070, 5080, 5090, 5100, 5110, 5120, 5130, 5140, 5150, 5160, 5170, 5180, 5190, 5200, 5210, 5220, 5230, 5240, 5250, 5260, 5270, 5280, 5290, 5300, 5310, 5320, 5330, 5340, 5350, 5360, 5370, 5380, 5390, 5400, 5410, 5420, 5430, 5440, 5450, 5460, 5470, 5480, 5490, 5500, 5510, 5520, 5530, 5540, 5550, 5560, 5570, 5580, 5590, 5600, 5610, 5620, 5630, 5640, 5650, 5660, 5670, 5680, 5690, 5700, 5710, 5720, 5730, 5740, 5750, 5760, 5770, 5780, 5790, 5800, 5810, 5820, 5830, 5840, 5850, 5860, 5870, 5880, 5890, 5900, 5910, 5920, 5930, 5940, 5950, 5960, 5970, 5980, 5990, 6000, 6010, 6020, 6030, 6040, 6050, 6060, 6070, 6080, 6090, 6100, 6110, 6120, 6130, 6140, 6150, 6160, 6170, 6180, 6190, 6200, 6210, 6220, 6230, 6240, 6250, 6260, 6270, 6280, 6290, 6300, 6310, 6320, 6330, 6340, 6350, 6360, 6370, 6380, 6390, 6400, 6410, 6420, 6430, 6440, 6450, 6460, 6470, 6480, 6490, 6500, 6510, 6520, 6530, 6540, 6550, 6560, 6570, 6580, 6590, 6600, 6610, 6620, 6630, 6640, 6650, 6660, 6670, 6680, 6690, 6700, 6710, 6720, 6730, 6740, 6750, 6760, 6770, 6780, 6790, 6800, 6810, 6820, 6830, 6840, 6850, 6860, 6



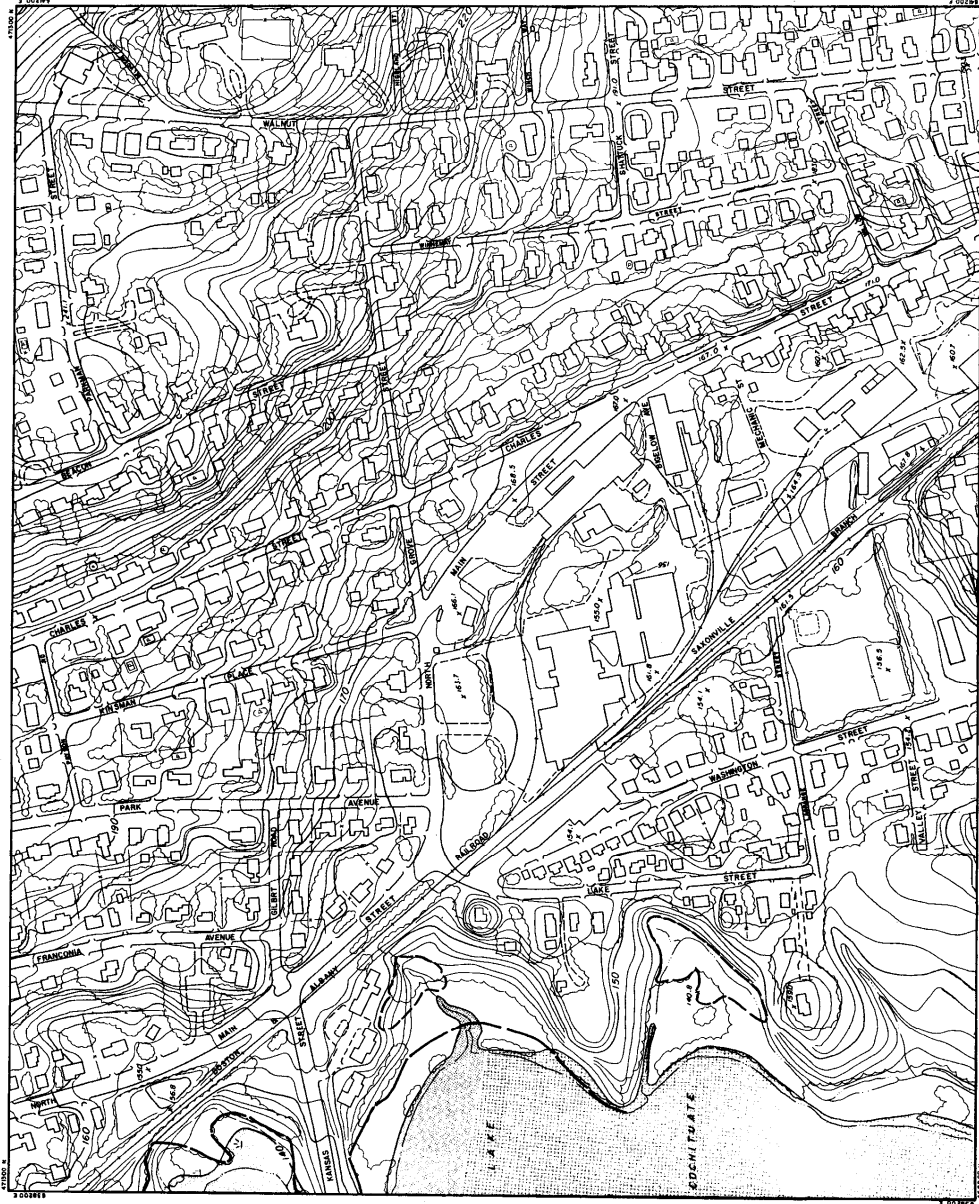
WETLAND DELINEATION

- PRIMARY ZONE
- TRANSITION ZONE
- FLOOD PLAIN

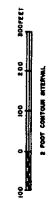


33	34	35
41	42	43
49	50	51

TOWN OF NATICK, MASSACHUSETTS
TOPOGRAPHIC SURVEY



26	27	28
34	35	36
42	43	45



WETLAND DELINEATION
PRIMARY ZONE
TRANSITION ZONE
FLOOD PLAIN

PREPARED UNDER THE DIRECTION OF
THE NATICK DEPT. OF PUBLIC WORKS
AND AIRPORT, INC.

**Appendix F - Natick Soldier Systems Center (NSSC) and Massachusetts State
Historic Preservation Office (MA SHPO) Programmatic Agreement**



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
William Francis Galvin, Secretary of the Commonwealth
Massachusetts Historical Commission

December 13, 2012

Anthony T. Mackos, P.E.
Chief, Engineering/Planning Division
Evaluation Branch
Department of the Army
New England District
Corps of Engineers
696 Virginia Road
Concord, MA 01742-2751

RE: U.S. Army Soldiers Systems Center (SSC), East of Lake Cochituate, Natick, MA;
MHC# RC.42510

Dear Mr. Mackos:

Thank you for submitting a draft MOA for future developments proposed as part of the soon-to-be-finalized Master Plan at the SSC in Natick.

The MHC has no concerns regarding the submitted draft MOA, which I have signed and enclosed for the signature of your office. The MHC looks forward to receiving a copy of the fully-signed MOA.

These comments are offered to assist in compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended (36 CFR 800). Please do not hesitate to contact Ryan Maciej of my staff if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Brona Simon".

Brona Simon
State Historic Preservation Officer
Executive Director
Massachusetts Historical Commission

Enclosure

xc: David Duncan, US Army Soldier Systems Center
Crystal I. Gardner, US Army Corps of Engineers
Kate Atwood, US Army Corps of Engineers
Natick Historical Commission (w/Copy of Enclosure)

**MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT
SUBMITTED TO THE ADVISORY COUNCIL ON HISTORIC PRESERVATION
FOR THE PROTECTION OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES
DURING NORMAL OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE
AT THE U.S. ARMY SOLDIERS SYSTEM CENTER
NATICK, MASSACHUSETTS**

WHEREAS, the U.S. Army Soldiers System Center (NSSC) operates and manages its facility in Natick, Massachusetts; and,

WHEREAS, 13 of the original buildings, structures, and objects, at the SSC, are contributing elements of the Natick Research and Development Laboratories, a district that has been determined eligible to the National Register of Historic Places (NR); and,

WHEREAS, the NSSC has determined that proposed and future improvements at the facility meet the definition of undertakings for the purposes of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended (NHPA) (P.L. 89-665, 16 U.S.C. 470f), and, therefore the NSSC is responsible for complying with Section 106 for these actions; and,

WHEREAS, the NSSC is responsible for complying with the NHPA including Section 110 that requires federal agencies 1) to establish a program to preserve, protect, identify, evaluate, and nominate historic properties under their jurisdiction or control in consultation with others, and 2) to give full consideration to the preservation of historic properties not under their jurisdiction or control but affected by federal agency undertakings; and,

WHEREAS, the NSSC has determined that operation and maintenance at their facility may have an effect on properties listed on or eligible for listing on the NR, and;

WHEREAS, in compliance with Section 106, the NSSC and Massachusetts State Historic Preservation Officer (MA SHPO), and the NSSC will implement this Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) for certain NSSC operation and management actions as outlined in this MOA, in accordance with 36 CFR Part 800, regulations for implementing Section 106 of the NHPA [16 U.S.C. Part 470(f)]; and,

WHEREAS, archaeological investigations were completed by the NSSC, including an intensive archaeological survey and a site examination at two loci of pre-contact material; and,

WHEREAS, out of four sites, no archaeological sites were determined eligible for the NR. The NSSC consulted with the appropriate Tribal Historic Preservation Officer, and received no response to the NSSC request for comment. The MA SHPO concurred in the results of the archaeological investigations and agreed no further studies needed to be completed at the Natick SSC; and,

WHEREAS, the NSSC completed photographic and written recordation of the Natick Research and Development Laboratories Historic District in accordance with the standards and regulations outlined in the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Archeology and Historic Preservation [48 FR 190 (1983)], and 950 CMR 70, prior to new construction being proposed by the installation's new Master Plan. The MA SHPO accepted the archival set of photographs as part of this documentation; with the final paper documentation sent on July 18, 2012; and,

WHEREAS, the NSSC completed an Integrated Cultural Resource Management Plan (ICRMP), in conjunction with the Master Plan, that will ensure that Section 106 and Section 110 compliance is completed at the facility. No response was received from the THPO. The MA SHPO concurred in the recommendations in the ICRMP. The final ICRMP was sent on July 18, 2012

NOW, THEREFORE, the NSSC, the MA SHPO, and Council agree that the operation and maintenance of the NSSC facility shall be administered in accordance with the following stipulations to avoid, minimize, or mitigate adverse effects and satisfy NSSC responsibilities under Section 106 for those actions outlined within this MOA.

STIPULATIONS

The NSSC shall ensure that the following measures are carried out in consultation with the MA SHPO.

A. EXEMPT AND NON-REPORTING UNDERTAKINGS

1. The NSSC, in consultation with the MA SHPO agree that the following types of undertakings and actions will be exempted from review and consultation under this MOA because they have little or no potential to affect historic properties. These undertakings must also involve minor, repetitive maintenance that will not alter the exterior appearance or setting of contributing, NR eligible structures.

a. Staining/painting/repair of existing concrete buildings

1. Removal of all existing paint or stain coatings from masonry surfaces and masonry joints, the repair and/or replacement of damaged masonry units and masonry surfaces, removal of old joint sealant, caulking, and backer rod at building expansion joints, around all window and door openings, and at all other building façades.
2. Application of clear primer and pigmented topcoat sealers to masonry façade, including joints. Primers and sealers will be in colors used in the past for maintenance of concrete. Paint on other than masonry, such as window or door frames will utilize colors similar to those used in the past at the NSSC.

3. Repair of existing masonry surfaces will include crack repair, general surface repair, and removal and replacement of individual concrete masonry units.
 4. These activities will follow plans and specifications which were previously reviewed and approved by the MA SHPO.
- b. Window and door replacement within NR eligible historic district
1. Window replacement would only be exempt if the replacement involves glazing similar to the original windows and takes place within existing fenestration. The original windows at the NSSC consisted of steel frames, with multiple projected sashes within each frame. Many of these windows were replaced in the 1970s, and involved removing the original steel frames, and replacing them with aluminum frames, many of which were not fit to the original fenestration.
 2. Window replacement must comply with the minimum window requirements in the Unified Facilities Criteria (UFC) 4-010-01, *DOD Minimum Antiterrorism Standards for Buildings*, dated October 8, 2003, and updated January 2007. The UFC 4-010-1 institutes the Antiterrorism/Force Protection (AT/FP) requirements that DOD is committed to effectively minimize loss of life from a terrorist attack. The glazing will mask construction elements needed for AT/FP, and will evoke the original 1954-55 design.
 3. Window openings with aluminum louvers, will be replaced to louvers similar in appear but that will meet blast requirements.
 4. Curtain walls will be replaced within current fenestration limits but will use a combination of spandrel glass and tinted, glazed, double-pane windows. Fenestration will not change, but windows will be more energy efficient and will meet AT/FP requirements.
 5. Current main entry doors are aluminum framed with glass panels. Service doors are generally hollow core steel in steel frames. Door replacement will only be exempt if the doors are similar in size and appearance to the original doors on the structure.
 6. If a design change in the doors is anticipated, the NSSC will consult with the MA SHPO, to determine the effects to historic properties.
 7. These activities will follow plans and specifications which were previously reviewed and approved by the MA SHPO.
- c. Exterior stair replacement
1. All concrete stairs and landings that are original to the facility will be replaced as needed due to safety and maintenance issues. The stairs will be replaced in-kind using granite rather than concrete for durability. The granite will be similar in appearance to the existing concrete but will last longer for safety reasons.

2. These activities will follow plans and specifications which were previously reviewed and approved by the MA SHPO.
- d. Exterior canopy replacement
1. Most buildings that are contributing structures to the NR eligible historic district have a canopy overhang at building entrances. Replacement of overhang canopies must not affect the setting and appearance of the original structure in order to be considered an exempt undertaking.
 2. Canopies are constructed of concrete with concrete ribbing covered with concrete panels. If concrete paneling cracks and becomes a safety hazard, the panels will be replaced with aluminum skin "Granite Stone" insulated panels. Any panels replaced over curtain walls will match the existing mullion layout of the glass curtain.
 3. The "Granite Stone" panels must closely resemble the original concrete.
 4. These activities will follow plans and specifications which were previously reviewed and approved by the MA SHPO.

B. FUTURE PROJECTS PLANNED THAT WILL TRIGGER A REVIEW WITH MA SHPO

1. The NSSC has several known future projects that are anticipated to require extensive consultation with the MA SHPO. The timeline for these projects are not yet known. These include: 1) connecting wings between Building 3 and Building 4; 2) exterior façade upgrades (excluding exempt undertakings such as staining, and window and door replacements); 3) Building 32 (Recreation Center) façade upgrade;) Building 1 Elevator.

2. The NSSC shall ensure that the project designs for new construction are compatible with the historic and architectural qualities of the Natick Research and Development Laboratories Historic District in terms of scale, massing, color, and materials, and is responsive to the recommended approaches to new construction set forth in the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings* (U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 1983), and that the design and specifications for the projects are developed in consultation with the MA SHPO and submitted to the MA SHPO for approval.

3. These projects will be coordinated following the steps laid out in the final ICRMP to avoid, minimize, or mitigate adverse effects to the Natick Research and Development Laboratories Historic District.

C. REPORTING

1. The NSSC shall ensure that reports on all activities carried out pursuant to this MOA are provided to the MA SHPO, and upon request, to other interested parties.

D. UNIDENTIFIED HISTORIC PROPERTIES

1. The NSSC will ensure that if additional previously unidentified historic properties are discovered which may be affected by any undertaking, they will notify the MA SHPO. The NSSC and the MA SHPO will apply the National Register criteria of eligibility and consult pursuant to 36 CFR 800.4.

E. ANNUAL REVIEW

1. The parties to this MOA shall consult annually to review implementation of the terms of this Agreement and determine whether revisions are needed. If revisions are needed, the NSSC and MA SHPO will consult in accordance with 36 CFR Part 800 to make such revisions.

F. DISPUTE RESOLUTION

1. Should the MA SHPO object within thirty (30) days to any actions proposed or carried out pursuant to this agreement, the NSSC shall consult with the MA SHPO to resolve the objection. If the NSSC determines that the objection cannot be resolved, the NSSC shall forward all documentation relevant to the dispute to the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (Council). Within thirty (30) days after receipt of all pertinent documentation, the Council will either:

- a. provide the NSSC with recommendations which they will take into account in reaching a final decision regarding the dispute; or
- b. notify the NSSC that it will comment pursuant to 36 CFR 800.6(b), and proceed to comment. Any recommendations or comment provided by the Council will be understood to pertain only to the subject of the dispute; the SSC's responsibility to carry out all actions under the Memorandum of Agreement that are not subjects of the dispute will remain unchanged.


2. At any time during the implementation of the measures stipulated in this agreement, should any objection regarding the subject matter of this agreement be raised by a member of the public, the NSSC shall take the objection into account and consult as needed with the objecting party, the MA SHPO, or the Council to resolve the objection.

G. SUNSET CLAUSE

1. This MOA will be in effect for ten (10) years after signing, unless the SSC and the MA SHPO agree to terminate or extend the Agreement beyond that date.

Execution of this Memorandum of Agreement by the NSSC and the MA SHPO, its subsequent filing with the Council, and the implementation of its terms, shall establish that the NSSC has taken into account the effects of their undertakings on historic properties.

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY, SOLDIERS SYSTEM CENTER

By:  Date: 1/11/13
FRANK K. SOBCHAK
Lieutenant Colonel
Garrison Commander

MASSACHUSETTS STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER

By: Brona Simon Date: December 13, 2012
BRONA SIMON
Executive Director
State Historic Preservation Officer